

Nurses sent out by a certain Society are expressly told that they are not to do what the doctor tells them to do, but to nurse the case as they have been taught to do. This vaulting ambition must of course, inevitably over-reach itself, and in any case medical men have the remedy for such a state of things in their own hands. The Nurses themselves would be the first to suffer from their 'independence,' for they could not possibly stand alone. Doctors can have nothing to fear from their rivalry, and can even, if need be, dispense with their assistance. As long, however, as they are willing to co-operate loyally in the care of the sick, without meddling with things outside their province, we will welcome their help. But there is no room for persons who wish to practise medicine without the guarantees implied by the possession of a legal qualification. To allow this would be a step of the most retrograde character.

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I am glad to have the powerful support of the *Lancet* in my pleading for a return to common sense in the matter of the training of Nurses. The old Nurse was not, perhaps, a thing of beauty in her moral aspects, and she imperfectly realised the idea of a ministering angel. On the other hand, the 'New Nurse' is often a creature too bright and good for human nature's daily food. What both the public and the profession want is a sufficient supply of decent, sensible, trustworthy women, who have received a sound training, and who are fitted, not only by experience, but by power of sympathy, to be helpful in the sick room without being an additional disturbing element in the household.

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I am convinced—and from the numerous letters on the subject which I have received I find that many of my professional brethren are in perfect agreement with me on the point—that the training of Nurses as at present carried out in many of the leading Schools of Nursing is pitched in altogether too high a key. Of what use, for instance, is a knowledge of anatomy to a Nurse? Even if she knew 'Gray' and 'Ellis' by heart, such knowledge would be of no help to her. Is she likely to be the better for a smattering? Yet to such a degree does this craze prevail that I believe there is an entrance examination at one of our London Hospitals, and a poor girl who had come all the way from Scotland in the hope of being admitted as a Probationer, had to go home again crestfallen because she was found wanting in anatomy and physiology! Where is this kind of folly going to stop? Certain it is that if this educational hyperpyrexia continues, the 'New Nurse' will soon become as great a terror to mankind as the New Woman."

That it is the avowed ambition of the great body of educated Nurses—whose work has largely conduced to the reform of Hospital administration and to the efficient nursing of the sick—to raise their vocation into a well organised and State-regulated profession we heartily admit; and as one of the women who has been privileged to help forward this desirable consummation we have little doubt that such laudable ambition upon the part of Nurses will in time be gratified; but the emancipation of the Nurse from the professional control of the medical man has never, and will never, be advocated by the *thoroughly trained* Nurses, as the first tenet of their professional creed is to fit themselves to carry out in the most efficient manner the scientific directions the medical man may direct for the welfare of the patients in their professional relations. This lesson can only be learnt under the discipline pertaining in a well-organised Training School for Nurses, where the work of doctor and Nurse is clearly defined and loyally performed.

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But the Nurse is no longer the domestic servant of the medical man, either in her Training School or in private practice; she is, or ought to be, his subordinate officer and skilled assistant; and in recognising her professional position, the best discipline and the most loyal co-operation can alone be maintained between the two.

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To gravely assert that a Society of private Nurses, the workers in which "are expressly told that they are not to do what the doctor tells them to do" could continue to exist for a week, is either the suggestion of unreasonable malice or the outcome of colossal ignorance. We think it would have been wiser if the Editor of the *Practitioner* had consulted the medical reports of the Nurses of the Society to which he alludes, before advancing so ridiculous an argument against private Nurses in general.

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The Editor questions, "Of what use, for instance, is the knowledge of anatomy to a Nurse?"!! The counter question is obvious—Can a woman have received a "sound training" as a Nurse unless that training is on a scientific basis? Certainly not. It therefore becomes her duty to acquire that knowledge; and, so far as the knowledge of anatomy is concerned, it is not only the duty of the Nurse, but of every woman, to understand the general constitution of her own body, and also to employ her reasoning faculties and what knowledge she can acquire, in the discharge of any duties which she may undertake.

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