

them with efficient, and trustworthy assistants, not in the least to supplant them, and told him how several of the Florentine Hospital nuns had wished for intelligent and conscientious *infermière*, instead of the rough and ignorant low class women they usually have under them. But he answered that the Roman nuns preferred having everything in their own hands, and would rather continue with ignorant *infermière* who obeyed them, than risk the taking of educated ones whom they would fear might ultimately oust power from them.

I saw the reasonableness of this point of view; they would not understand that intelligent and nice Nurses would be far more obedient to them, as co-workers with the doctors, than these untrained, unconscientious women, who need perpetual supervision. And of course there always is the possibility that here and there, in small new Hospitals for instance, modern doctors may prefer calling in well-trained secular Nurses, to having nuns, who may or may not be trained, given by a Mother Superior, who moves them about mainly as she chooses.

I suggested therefore, the other argument, which one feels ought to appeal to every nun who loves Nursing, and is a real *Sister* to humanity. The duty of helping her lay Sisters who need to gain their living, but yet desire to do good, to earn a moderate independence by private Nursing. Surely every true charitable nun must wish to co-operate in this double good work?

He smiled as he answered, "But here too they like the field for themselves, and say no one without the religious vocation ought to be allowed to Nurse."

"But if girls have poor parents or infirm relations, ought they not to earn for them?"

"Naturally! But the nuns would say, 'Let them earn in some other manner.'"

This was decidedly depressing; for though, of course, I had thought out these objections over and over again, it is different to hear them stated by someone else when one is on the vigil of combating for one's convictions.

For a moment, it almost seemed as if the wisest thing to do would be to give up an apparently hopeless task. But somehow, I never can really doubt the correctness of the two propositions I have been repeating for some two and a half years, viz. :-

(a) The poor are not as well nursed in Italy as they are in Germany, Switzerland, England, or America; doctors who have travelled, all own this.

(b) Intelligent and moderately educated young women (of the teacher class), need a new profession.

To bring these two needs together—those who need intelligent Nursing, and those who could make that their profession—is what I am to aim at till I can find the Italian Florence Nightingale who will succeed in doing it.

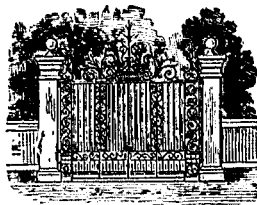
I repeated this to the Professor. I fancy he thought me rather a strange enthusiast, but he assented to all I said. "I am of your opinion entirely. But few will either understand or believe you. The enlightened like Donna Maria, yes; but the nuns, never. 'Sono tutte di cervello piccolo.'"

"All no! I have found sympathy and comprehension in several, with the others we must have patience till they understand. All good things come through difficulties."

"Speriamo," in a voice the reverse of hopeful. "Meanwhile, let us go in the wards."

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



FIVE of the principal Women's Suffrage Societies have appointed a Joint Sub-Committee for the conduct of the Parliamentary arrangements of the movement. This Sub-Committee have recently met and have decided to ask those Members of the

House of Commons who are in favour of the extension of the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, to ballot for a day for a Bill immediately after the opening of the Session.

The following Societies are represented on the Sub-Committee :-

Central Committee National Society for Women's Suffrage :—The Lady Frances Balfour, Miss Helen Blackburn, Mrs. Fawcett.

Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage :—Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttelton, Rev. S. A. Steinthal, Miss Roper.

Central National Society for Women's Suffrage :—Mrs. Russell Cooke, Mrs. Eva McLaren, Mrs. Wynford Philipps.

Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage :—Miss Louisa Stevenson, Miss Methven.

Bristol and West of England Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage :—Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, Mrs. Beddoe.

News comes from Berlin of a step in the direction of "equality in omnibuses" for man and woman. It has always been an unwritten law in Berlin that no woman should "ride outside" a bus. But one woman found the courage to climb up, and her example has been followed in a wholesale way, and Berlin ladies will continue to enjoy the luxury of garden seats until, perhaps, their Emperor issues a Protocol forbidding such emancipation!

An American paper says :—"A recent number of the *Buffalo Medical Journal*, was a women's number, edited by Dr. Maud Josephine Fry, assisted by seven other physicians of the gentler sex. All the original communications were by women, and the items are on subjects relating to professional women. The number is one of great interest and reflects credit upon the able editors. We would suggest that copies be sent, as a missionary enterprise, to some of the conservative old fossils in London, who are carried once a year to the Annual Meetings of their societies to squeak out their horror and detestation of women who practise medicine."

Mrs. Ormiston Chant is taking her share in the good work of helping the Armenian refugees, begun by Lady Henry Somerset and Miss Willard. Mrs. Chant has gone to Varna, accompanied by an Armenian gentleman, who will act as interpreter and help her in the administrative work of distributing the eighty-six bales of warm clothing, blankets, &c., which already await her at Varna. Two Scotch manufacturing firms have contributed generously.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)