

In the next place, it is asserted that the work of nurses is of such a nature that moral qualities are vastly more important than technical knowledge; and that, therefore, Registration and examinations which can only deal with the latter are inapplicable to their case. Admitting that moral qualities are most important, it cannot be seriously argued that a woman who is entrusted with the care of a sick person should not be thoroughly acquainted with the technical duties which might at any moment be required from her, and upon the proper performance of which the very life of her patient might suddenly depend. A nurse, for instance, might be possessed of every virtue in a superlative degree; but if, through ignorance, she allowed her patient to bleed to death, his friends and relatives might consider her moral qualities were not all sufficient. It is also fair to argue that a woman who has for three years faithfully performed the arduous and self-sacrificing duties involved in hospital work is more likely to be possessed, or any rate has given more evidence of her possession, of the highest moral qualities than are probably owned by a woman who has no hesitation in undertaking the very responsible duties of a trained nurse without any education or experience fitting her for their due performance.

I have scrupulously refrained from making the case for Nursing reform too strong. It would, unhappily, have been easy for me, with my intimate knowledge of the Nursing profession during the past twenty years, to have painted the present evils in lurid colours, but I hope I have said sufficient to show that reforms are urgently needed in the Nursing world, and that it is for the public to demand that protection for the sick against untrained and untrustworthy nurses which is at present non-existent. Nurses, as I have shown, have attempted to reform their own calling. They are for the moment checked and hindered in their advance, and it is therefore for the public now to move in the matter. As I said before, in my judgment, this is a matter especially for women to undertake, and for women to carry through, as a duty to their sex, and to their homes. If the women's societies desire to do something practical for the national good, they should strengthen the hands of the women who are striving to effect nursing reforms. They can do so, by bringing influence to bear upon Members of Parliament to grant a public inquiry into the present condition of nursing affairs. Women's societies could do a great and national work by urging upon Members of Parliament the need for a Nursing Act which would, by improving the education and discipline of trained nurses, safeguard the sick, advance the efficiency and usefulness of nurses to an immeasurable degree, and effectually bring about "The Better Organization of the Nursing Profession."

### Nursing Politics.

WHEN the plot was hatching, in 1894, to deprive the founders of the Royal British Nurses' Association of their *ex-officio* seats on the General Council and Executive Committee, it became necessary to malign and impute base motives to those persons who founded the Association, and who had given years of conscientious hard work to make it successful. Such good work always is successful in the long run, and the granting of the Royal Charter, "for the public benefit," and paying upwards of £900 for the legal expenses of the contest, from a reserve fund, crowned the success of that work.

WE are well aware that one of the utterly false statements widely circulated by those in terror of "nursing as a profession" was that the matrons who had made the Association were desirous of "ousting" Her Royal Highness, Princess Christian, from the Presidency of the Royal British Nurses' Association; and at the General Council Meeting, in October, 1894, composed of upwards of fifty medical men, who had been whipped up from Scotland and all over England, and a few nurses, Sir James Crichton Browne made this untrue statement from the chair. Other equally untrue statements of the same nature were also widely circulated, of course in order to prejudice the President against those ladies who for six years had worked with Her Royal Highness in the most harmonious manner.

IN last week's *Hospital*, Miss Louisa East, a school matron at Eton, and lately the untrained matron of the National Hospital, Queen Square, makes the further false assertion, that the aim of the "Members' Rights Defence Committee is to have Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, our President, if they can. We must prove our loyalty to our Royal President by giving our unanimous 'vote of confidence' in the Executive Committee."

IN perfectly plain English this is untrue and intended to mislead, and we call upon Miss Louisa East, who is not a member of the Members' Rights Defence Committee, to bring forward one iota of proof in support of her statement concerning the leaders of the nursing profession who largely compose that Committee. This lady was lately the very appropriate mouthpiece in the *Hospital* of the Outterson Wood party, who propose, and intend if they can, to force upon the Register of Trained Hospital Nurses, asylum attendants, male and female, who have never been trained in a general hospital

WE have before condemned, and we do so again in the most serious manner, the conduct of the

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