

## Annotations.

### PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE.

THE Royal College of Surgeons is a body composed professedly entirely, and for the most part actually, of gentlemen. We may take it for granted, therefore, that the code of honour of this body is that of the class from which its members are drawn. It is well known also that strict professional etiquette is observed by members of the medical profession towards one another, and that any medical man who infringes the unwritten rules of the order is at once visited with the disapproval and censure of his colleagues.

We wonder, therefore, what the Royal College of Surgeons would think of the conduct of one of its Fellows towards the members of a kindred, if subordinate, profession. Is it consistent with its idea of honour that a medical man should try to induce a nurse to break an engagement into which she had entered, in order to join a so-called Co-operation, in which he himself is pecuniarily interested? We cannot believe that a body which is so scrupulously punctilious in its own professional etiquette will approve of such a proceeding. The views of the President of the Royal College of Surgeons on this point would, we are sure, be received with interest by nurses.

### CRIMINALS, LUNATICS, PAUPERS, AND WOMEN.

A CORRESPONDENT, writing to the *Morning Post*, expresses regret that "in this year of the Jubilee of our great Queen, when so many doctors have received Jubilee Honours," nothing has been done to improve the lot of nurses. We share his regret, and we should have hailed with satisfaction an honour list which included the names of eminent women, in the nursing, as well as other women's professions, as a token that Her Majesty's advisers had seen the justice, and the fitness, of paying honour to their sovereign, by removing from the sex to which she belongs, and which she has so nobly adorned, the stigma of disgrace which at present attaches to it. The legal status of the women of England, whose Queen is honoured, as no other sovereign is honoured, all over the civilised world, is on a par with that of CRIMINALS, LUNATICS, and PAUPERS; indeed, it is below it, for criminals who have served their sentence, are entitled to record their votes in favour of those whom they desire to represent them in the Legislature. Lunatics who have recovered their reason are entitled to a like privilege. Only women remain for ever voteless in the State; and their interests

can consequently be safely ignored. It is perhaps scarcely to be expected, therefore, that women shall receive honours before they receive justice; but the anomaly, and the inconsistency, at present supported by our rulers, of honouring as the greatest and best Sovereign this country has ever had, one who belongs to the sex which they deliberately ignore and insult, is one which needs only to be pointed out to be recognised, and, we hope, rectified.

### THE MEDICAL PRESS AND NURSING MATTERS.

THE medical papers usually ignore the subject of nursing so completely that their readers might almost be pardoned for wondering if such a thing as trained nursing exists; or if the services of the nurses of the present day, to whom such a leader of the medical profession as the late Sir William Savory, did not hesitate to generously ascribe much of the success of the surgeon's work, are of any practical utility to medical men. It is the more significant therefore that, in its two last issues, the *British Medical Journal* has devoted considerable space in its columns to discussing the nursing profession. As a matter of fact, the trained nurse has "come to stay," and can no longer be ignored. She may be alternately depreciated, or flattered and overpraised; patronised, or assisted to attain the professional status to which she is entitled; be insulted and maligned, or told she is the nearest thing to an angel in this wicked world, but she has undoubtedly stamped the present century with her individuality, and it remains to the future to legislate for her, and to define her position; for that so large and important a body, as the trained nurses of to-day have become, can be allowed to remain unorganised and uncontrolled by the State, each one being a law to herself, and determining her own code of professional conduct, it is impossible to believe. We hope therefore, that questions affecting the interests of nurses, will no longer be ignored in these journals, but that the medical profession, with whom nurses are so closely connected, and who widely admit that the present triumphs of medicine and surgery could never be achieved, without the conscientious and skilled care of the sick, rendered by the nurses of to-day, will acquaint themselves with the needs of nurses, and afford to them that help, in organising themselves into a profession, which their own comparatively recent experiences in the same direction, renders them peculiarly able, if they will, to afford. The remarks of the *British Medical Journal* on the Royal British Nurses' Association are very fair, and we propose to comment upon them, next week.

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