

whether it was his English accent or his villainous tobacco—all of which the soldier took in very good part, until Forbes made a jesting remark about his small sword-bayonet, calling it a little pig-knife. Promptly the man turned on him in a fury. "How dare he joke at a Prussian soldier's uniform or arms, eh?" and Forbes had to apologise humbly before peace was restored. This is the sort of anger that a Nurse ought to feel when she hears her colleagues joking and making light of their work and profession, inventing slang words and nicknames for their duties and discipline; for a Nurse should be the last person to cast ridicule upon her own calling, or discredit it in the eyes of the public. A Nurse's *esprit de corps* should be as strong as the soldier's; and as he resented the slightest indignity or sneering at the arms or uniform he wore, so should she equally resent such depreciation, should be equally warm in the defence of the laws of the Hospital in which she works, and equally jealous of its good repute and honour.

WHAT IS NURSING?

WHAT *is* Nursing? It has been called an art, a science, a profession, a vocation, a heaven-born gift, a laboriously acquired task. Where does the truth lie, what is the pith and marrow of Nursing? Should we not, perhaps, be most correct in considering each and all of these terms to be right in expressing the body of Nursing, as expressed by different characters and dispositions, while its essence or spirit is something that must be within them all?

Nursing *is* an art, in which no one really attains the true artist's perfection unless she has an artist's appreciation of the delicate touches.

Nursing *is* a science, with laws that cannot be disobeyed with impunity.

Nursing *is* a profession, to learn whose principles thoroughly is a work of time and labour.

Nursing *is* a vocation, for no woman without the true Nursing instinct will ever make a really good Nurse, even though she spends her life in learning its rules.

Nursing *is* a heaven-born gift, but one that requires careful cultivation.

For the very spirit of Nursing is something that may manifest itself as clearly in the poor woman who, out "charing" all day, is in the greatest request among her neighbours at night when they are ill, because she is "such a good Nurse," as well as in the Sister of Mercy, whose whole life is devoted to her vocation, or the clever Hospital Nurse who is beloved by her patients, trusted by her Medical men, who takes such a keen interest

in her "cases," and is "up to date" in her work. Is there not underlying all true sick Nursing, however learnt or acquired, some special gift, some peculiar instinct, quite as inexplicable as that which makes the difference between the true artist and the clever workman—something which will make an observant Sister say at once, after seeing a new Probationer at work (long before she has learnt the art or science of Nursing), "That woman will make a good Nurse"? Just as Giotto's rough, boyish charcoal sketches were to Ciambue the works of an embryo painter, with the soul of a great artist.

THE BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

PLYMOUTH.

A LARGE meeting of Medical men, Hospital Matrons, and Nurses, was held on the 13th inst., at the South Devon Hospital, for the purpose of considering the objects and constitution of the British Nurses' Association, which has been founded under the presidency of H.R.H. Princess Christian, in order to unite British Nurses "for their mutual help and protection, and for the advancement in every way of their professional work." Miss Wood, the secretary, attended to give an explanatory address. There were also present Dr. W. Square (in the chair), Dr. Prance, Dr. C. Bulteel, Messrs. H. Greenway, J. H. S. May, Marcus Bulteel, W. Buchan, L. Pilkington Jackson, Mr. Perks (House Surgeon, Royal Albert Hospital), Mr. Woolcombe (House Surgeon, South Devon Hospital), Mr. Moore (Assistant House Surgeon, South Devon Hospital), Miss Hopkins (Matron, South Devon Hospital), Miss Dunstan (Matron, Royal Albert Hospital), and one Nurse; Miss Jacobs (Head Sister, Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth), and one Sister; two Sisters from the Military Hospital, Miss Meeres (Matron, Royal Eye Infirmary), Miss Phare (Matron, Convalescent Home, Knackers Knowle), Mrs. McNally (District Nurse at Penzance), several Trained Private Nurses (independent), and Matrons and Nurses from all the Hospitals in the locality.

Letters of regret at being unable to attend the meeting were received from Sir Massey and Lady Lopes, the Earl of Mount-Edgcumbe (Chairman of Committee), General and Mrs. Fowler Burton, Mr. Benwell Bird, the Rev. A. Bonus, Mr. and Mrs. McAndrew, the Matrons of the Hospitals at Truro, Penzance, Teignmouth, Launceston; Head Nurse of Ottery St. Mary Cottage Hospital; Lady Superintendent, Trained Nurses' Home, Truro; and others.

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