

standard of efficiency, and an ethical standard of conduct, there would be many difficulties and much opposition before we obtained it, but nothing would ever be gained by being afraid of difficulties. We must hold on to what we want in the face of all opposition. Personally she was, and always had been, heart and soul for registration.

Miss MOLLETT, President of the League of Royal South Hants Nurses said she made no apology for appearing before the meeting with a very old journal (the first number of the NURSING RECORD) in her hand. It contained a paper written by herself fifteen years ago, embodying her views on the question, and with its permission she would proceed to read it.

"Hospitals, metropolitan and provincial, are now filled with women who are members of what may justly be called a profession—a profession requiring for its members women of peculiarly suitable character and temperament, trained on a principle that must have for its object not only a scheme of theoretical and practical instruction, that will ensure perfection in technical details, but a discipline that will inculcate intelligent obedience and self-denial.

Educated women are not wanting who are willing to undergo this training, which is often irksome in its details, often trying to the health, but wonderfully compensating, as shown by the keen interest that, in common with all scientific pursuits, is engendered in its followers.

The "trained hospital nurse" is now a recognised factor in the treatment of disease in private life—a factor of immense importance in all those cases, medical or surgical, where the patient's life depends on hourly skillful treatment and careful appreciation of detail. Such nurses—nurses who take a keen interest in their work, who leave no stone unturned that patience or skill can move to save their patient's life, who understand and are therefore able intelligently to fulfil the medical man's orders—are simply his invaluable *aides-de-camp*, his right hands. But what shall we say of those ignorant women who with inadequate, insufficient training and semi-knowledge, pass themselves off on the public as "trained nurses"—women who would be comparatively harmless if recognised as ignorant and well-meaning, but who become positively dangerous if, classed as skilled nurses, they have duties and responsibilities assigned to them which they are totally unfitted to fulfil. Such women, especially if gifted with a glib tongue and pleasant manner, do an immense amount of harm by exciting misplaced confidence and trust.

The curriculum pursued by probationers training for nurses at our best London and County training schools, and at many smaller country hospitals, is excellent and thorough. The heads are themselves trained nurses, and many of them come fully up to Florence Nightingale's description of what the head of a training school should be—"herself the best nurse in the place, the model of all her nurses would wish to be."

But besides these schools for nurses, where every opportunity is given them for thoroughly learning their profession, there are other institutions whose methods are far less complete, where little time or attention is given to their training, but where they none the less receive a certificate, after a short and often very insufficient test, as "hospital trained nurses."

Many good hospitals, which otherwise train their nurses well, lend themselves to the inefficient training

of nurses, especially those intended for private work, by taking women for very short periods of training on the payment of so much a week. I have not infrequently heard a nurse say "Oh, I went to such and such a hospital for three months, just to get the name of having been there." Such a nurse would have to pass no real test as to her efficiency before starting on a private nursing career. All these inefficient, half-trained women bear the same name, and are not in any way distinct from those who have passed a thorough and careful training.

The title of "trained nurse" is now, therefore, only an ambiguous term, conveying no meaning—or often an erroneous and incorrect notion—to the listener.

When a man is stated to be a doctor it is understood that he has passed certain legally recognised examinations, and has gone through a certain legally recognised course of training to fit him for the duties of his profession when he holds the legal status of a medical man. When a woman states that she is a certificated governess, we know that she holds certain legal evidence of having passed recognised examinations proving her to possess, at all events the necessary, knowledge to instruct her pupils. But when a woman states that she is a "trained nurse" it often means nothing, or at best is a doubtful, ill-defined term signifying a doubtful and uncertain course of training, closing with an examination which varies considerably at different training schools, and whose certificate gives the nurse absolutely no legal status as a "trained nurse."

It is manifestly unfair and unjust that such a state of things should not be altered, and the idea that it is an evil that requires remedying is not new.

Some years ago Sir Henry Acland wrote:—

"The Medical Act of 1858 allows women to be registered as medical practitioners. It makes no provision for the registration of nurses—however complete their education and however great their skill either as nurses or midwives.

"Many accomplished women might reasonably deserve the name as well as the functions of superintendents of hospitals, or of ward-sisters, or of nurses. At present they can have no such legal recognition of their qualifications in either department as is obtained by their sisters who become schoolmistresses, or who are students and teachers of art. That this ought to be remedied can hardly admit of doubt; but it rests with the women of England to decide whether what is here advocated has their support as well as their approval, or whether the sole relation they will have to the medical profession is to be that of the ordinary licence to practise surgery and medicine as with men. There are signs that some who desire this last undervalued or despise the profession of nursing in the wide sense of this volume (Miss Lee's "Handbook for Hospital Sisters"). If these even consulted their own interests they would support and not look down upon what in their view is at all events half way to a better end."

The time has now certainly come when the women of England, the nurses of England, *must* grapple with this question, or their profession will not only remain in its present uncertain, ill-regulated state, but will become more and more flooded with those women whose half-knowledge is almost more dangerous than the whole ignorance of the old nurse.

Nurses who have, therefore, the true honour, wel-

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