

an end. Why cannot Indians and natives have men of their own nationality put to attend on them for these mean and degrading offices?

Time was when the nursing of the sick in this country was considered a "mean and degrading" occupation, when the sick in our hospitals and infirmary wards were left to the tender mercies of pauper attendants and of women of the lowest classes, when it would have been considered a "disgraceful and degrading thing" that refined women should undertake the nursing care of pauper patients. Happily, a truer appreciation of the claims of humanity, of our duty to the sick of all classes of the community, and of the fact, slowly learnt by the leisured classes, that all work well performed is honourable, and that the dignity of labour surpasses that of idleness, is now gaining ground in this country. The nursing of the sick has, through the efforts of pioneer workers, become an honourable profession for women, and educated girls find nothing degrading or intolerable in washing and attending the sick white man. Now, if we nurses have learnt anything, we have learnt that neither sex, colour, nor creed enters into our consideration in relation to the performance of nursing duties. The qualifications of necessity and sickness are the only ones which concern us. A sick man all the world over, be he black or white, brown or yellow, is entitled to the same care at our hands, and it will be an ill day for our profession when he ceases to receive it.

Are nurses becoming enervated and unfitted for work by the conditions under which they are trained at the present day that they cannot undertake the duties of their office? "Imagine," says "A Durban Lady," "a refined white girl having to attend to the dysentery cases of these people! The thing is too shocking to write about." We do imagine it. Last week we quoted the letter of a lady who urged, in relation to private nursing, that "a bed fitted on to suitable drainage would enable nursing to be done without inflicting intolerable labour on persons of desirable sensitiveness." We then expressed the opinion that persons whose sensitiveness will not allow them to attend to the needs of patients are not suitable for nursing work. We repeat the opinion without distinction of colour. As to Indians and natives attending on men of their own nationality, by all means. These folk have, as even "A Durban Lady" admits, "a delicate sense of decency," and are often distressed that European nurses should perform every nursing office for them. But the services rendered must be skilled and trained. To teach, the teacher must give practical illustration of the methods employed, and, as we do not entrust our most critical cases to probationers, for some time to come she must keep the nursing of the most acute cases in her own hands.

What is needed in nurses who undertake work in hospitals where natives are admitted is the spirit of the pioneer. Let the woman who wants "a good time," junketings, dances, and the like, stay at home. The nurse who has the interests of her profession at heart, and really cares for the sick, will find ample scope for her abilities, and, while she gives practical demonstration that she regards no one who needs her care as "common or unclean," she will also do good work for native races in training them in nursing duties and teaching them habits of order, discipline, cleanliness, and manual dexterity in their work—teaching to which they respond with surprising quickness; and she will be rendering valuable service to the Empire by promoting the mutual understanding, and consequent good feeling impossible to establish when the white man's point of view is that the black one is "only a damned nigger anyhow."

The Protestant hospital at Bordeaux, where a nursing school has been in existence since 1890, has decided to adopt the programme drawn up by the Commission appointed by the Conseil Supérieur de l'Assistance Publique in 1899, and adopted by this Council as the standard of education in the future nursing schools of civil hospitals. The circular of the Minister of the Interior issued in October of last year instructs the Prefects to form these schools as soon as possible, and describes in detail the organisation of these institutions as regards the education and examination of candidates, their moral standard, their quarters, their uniform, and the necessity for arranging for their times off duty, and, most important, for their practical instruction, acquired by serving in rotation in the different departments of a hospital, in conjunction with theoretical lectures. Last, but not least, the circular emphasises the necessity of appointing as superintendent of each school a woman who can furnish unimpeachable guarantees of her professional competence.

For the last eighteen months in the Protestant hospital at Bordeaux, under the superintendence of Dr. Anna Hamilton, the curriculum of nursing education has attained a higher standard than that so far realised in any of the Parisian hospitals. The nursing staff are drawn from a well-educated class, and pass through a two years' period of training, the majority paying for their professional education. This at once places the instruction received on a right educational basis, and we hope that in the organisation of nurse-training in France this point will receive attention. It is good news that at last there is a definite movement to organise the nursing in French civil hospitals on a modern basis. It is sorely needed.

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