

certificate. Would Mrs. Fenwick like to see the means of their earning a living taken from them?

I have it for a fact that some doctors prefer a steady, experienced, uncertificated nurse to some of the flighty hospital specimens. I could name one training-school in particular where the nurses are noted for flirtation.

It is quite a common occurrence for patients to implore that no trained nurse shall again attend them. My own mother at the present time is just recovering from congestion of lungs and cardiac weakness. The doctor gave us very little hopes. But she has been most efficiently nursed by two well deserving the name of nurses. One a young widow who is able to support herself and little boy. It would have been impossible for her to have gone through three years' training. She is able to carry out doctor's orders, make out a report, take pulse, temperature, and respiration. Surely this does not need three years.

My advice to any nurse is to be *just and fear not*. Also to provide for a rainy day without being terrorised by any clique.

Some women have the presumption to call themselves trained nurses and wear uniform with merely six weeks' training in a maternity hospital.

There is no rule without exception, but, having had large experience, I know to my sorrow many three years' certificated nurses anything but a credit to their training-school.

And I for one should indeed be grieved if it ever became absolutely necessary for a nurse to be compelled to pay perhaps £1 ls. per annum for her name to be registered.

If she is fitted for the work there are plenty of broad-minded medical gentlemen who will give her a testimonial up to date. And patients and their friends will act as a reference, which to any sensible person would be more valuable than a certificate of bygone days which cannot be responsible for such a nurse's subsequent behaviour.

I must apologise for length of letter and sincerely hope no harm will overtake the noble army of unselfish women well deserving of the name of nurse, even if they do not possess a certificate, nor yet belong to a pension fund, and whose names are not to be found in a register which they do not feel justified in paying a guinea a year for.

Yours faithfully,  
SISTER ALICE.

[We are fully aware that many women who have not had the advantages which are offered to probationers at the present day have attained a considerable amount of dexterity by constant practice. No doubt full consideration will be given to their interests in any future legislation. What any Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses will aim at is the protection of the sick public from incompetent attendants; those who, while unwilling to pass through the training which will qualify them to act as nurses, do not hesitate to assume the title and the uniform of nurses, and to ask from the public the full fees of a thoroughly trained nurse. Also those who have been tested in our training-schools, and, having been found wanting, have not been allowed to continue their training.

"The broad-minded medical gentlemen" who employ untrained women will still be able to do so when the registration of trained nurses is an accomplished fact. The only difference will be that then

the public will be able to discriminate between the trained and the untrained. We are fully of opinion that *good* attention given by mothers or daughters, as the case may be, should be sufficient in many slight home ailments. Only it must be realised that the care of invalids is a serious matter, and anyone undertaking it must do it thoroughly. It cannot be sandwiched in, as an *arrière pensée*, between tennis and tea parties, dances, concerts, and what not, in the constant search for pleasure which occupies most of the time of many a modern woman.

But it is not the home nurse who demands "testimonials up to date" from "medical gentlemen," and we are glad to know that medical men are becoming increasingly chary of giving these documents to all and sundry—"steady, experienced, uncertificated nurses." We have quite a store of cuttings dealing with police-court cases in which women who pose as nurses are involved, but they do not include records of "highly-trained, fully-certificated" nurses. If our correspondent possesses these, we should be much obliged if she would furnish us with the particulars for the black-list which we are preparing for future use.

The fact is that whenever the organisation of nurses is seriously taken in hand there will be an outcry on behalf of those who fear that their means of livelihood will be endangered. We do not think any reputable women who have practised nursing for some years past need have fears on this score, as no legislation is retrospective, neither is it likely that they would be required to pay £1 ls. annually as a registration fee.—[Ed.]

#### NURSING HOMES.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—As a general medical practitioner, I have read with very great interest the letters appearing in your well-known paper on the question of private nursing homes. It has always seemed to me that the middle classes have been placed in the worst position in the matter of finding a suitable nursing home to resort to, and one which is in accord with their means, when an operation becomes necessary. The poor are always able to enter one of the infirmaries or hospitals, while the rich can afford to become patients in a West End nursing home, pay its heavy fees, and also those of some distinguished surgeon, who will, no doubt, very properly charge in conformity with the high position which he holds in the surgical world.

In the first place, the middle class need to be educated up to the fact that a capable general practitioner can do any of the minor operations, and possibly some of the major ones, and obtain results which compare favourably with those of our London hospitals. When this fact is fully appreciated, many more nursing institutions with moderate fees will doubtless be opened in the suburbs, and will be able to be carried on as a successful business concern. A few such homes already exist within a few miles of London.

Not long ago, while staying in Harrow, I came across one of these which is conducted by Miss Baxter, of Lincoln House, who was for many years Matron of the County and City of Cork Hospital.

The home is situated in a beautiful spot on the Hill, which is 400 feet high. It is fitted up on the most modern principles. Each patient has a separate

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