

every variety and complication of disease. Wounds to be dressed, posture to be attended to, medicine to be administered, tempers to be soothed, inquiries wisely answered, directions on all these subjects to be received from the physicians and the surgeons with respect to every one, and to be understood, remembered, and acted upon, day by day, week by week, the beds never empty, cure and death removing one anxious charge, only to be replaced by another—all these demand no light attention, no feeble character.

"3rd. The work of the one organising mind which is to superintend and regulate the steady, harmonious action of one or of several such wards.

"The functions, therefore, of a completely skilled nurse are threefold—superintendence, ministration, house work.

"The three are distinct only in large institutions. The three must be taught in any complete training institution.

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"The 'progress of civilisation' in this country is bringing about a general revision of the external and obvious arrangements which were supposed to constitute the framework of society. This appears often in an unexpected manner. Half a century ago nothing was more accepted as true than that bleeding was a *sine qua non* in pneumonia—that all surgeons were men—that cure was the highest function of the physician. We now admit that bleeding is not essential, that surgeons may be women, that in many things, medical as non-medical, we can prevent what we cannot cure.

"Thoughtful persons in every department are asking themselves, in this shuffle of the cards what is the outcome to be desired?

"In the matter of nurse-training this is certain—that a really skilled nurse in many cases influences at least as much as the physician the result of the illness; that nursing is, therefore, a fit object for the exercise of high moral qualities; that there is here an outlet for the energies and employment for the tender power and skill of good women of almost every class; that five years or ten years as a nursing Sister in a hospital should no more disqualify a young lady for a future and different life than going to the Bar for a few years should unfit a man for the life of a country gentleman; that a woman who, having had good general education, such as women now get, and having gone well and wisely through the discipline of Miss Nightingale's school at St. Thomas's, whatever her destiny in life might be, would adorn it, and prove in the truest sense a blessing to those in whose society she was afterwards placed. That much is certain. General culture, followed by the acquisition of some portions of physical science, and the study of their practical application to the relief of human suffering, the habit of firm though gentle command which a

ward sister must acquire, the contact with the administrative arrangements of a great hospital, the interest in the great questions of social organisation which surround the charge of the sick poor, all looked in a manner essentially belonging to the delicacy and the practical sympathy of woman's character, would make, as they have made, noble female characters.

"If there be any who think that the life here praised is one which cannot give scope to high intellectual attainment, they had better grapple more closely with a few of the material and psychical questions which arise round the sick man's bed. Having so grappled, they may find, as wiser men have found before, how much there is that centres in one life and in one death for him that has eyes to see and heart to understand.

"If these brief hints be germs of truth, the development of intelligent and skilled nursing as a profession will prove of incalculable benefit—first, to the sick and the poor in general, and, second, to women and to the medical profession in particular.

"Of the sick and the poor more need not be said. Of women, in relation to the medical profession, just a few words should be added.

#### PROPHETIC WORDS ON STATE REGISTRATION.

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

"Many accomplished women might reasonably desire the name as well as the function 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 school-mistresses, 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, undervalue or despise the profession of nursing in the wide sense of this volume. 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 higher end.

(To be continued.)

Viscount Churchill's residence, 9, Grosvenor Gardens, has been acquired and will be used in connection with Osborne House, Isle of Wight, presented to the nation by His Majesty the King as a convalescent home for officers.

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