

Sister Agnes Karll is just now hidden away in Switzerland at work on the translation, thereby doing German nurses a wonderful service. The great firm of Dietrich Reimer, of Berlin, is going to bring it out at its own expense, the first volume this year, the second in 1911. Reimer has invited Sister Agnes to add copious foot-notes about German nursing history. The policy of this firm in publishing is never to ask but one question, "Is the book needed?"

Miss Dock to the Rescue.

We are apt to think that because matters in the United States are more breezy than at home, nurses have no prejudice to contend with, but, indeed, they have, and wherever women are self-supporting, they are met with economic laws which attempt to depreciate the value of their work or to exploit their labour.

Though American men as a rule are generous to a fault to their "own women," a minority is to be found scattered through the various States which has the same innate contempt for the working woman as prevails in Europe.

The *New York Medical Journal* has given space recently to an article by a Dr. Potter, which would delight the heart of medical baronets, and the autocrats who compose the Central Hospital Council for London. We know all the miserable prejudice which inspires this article by heart, so will not waste space in quotes. To it Miss Dock replies, and as all that she says and writes is a valuable and heartening quantity for nurses, we have pleasure in reprinting part of her letter "to set straight some of the misdirected turns of Dr. Potter's thought." Miss Dock squanders the enemy on several educational inaccuracies, and then proceeds:—

STATE REGISTRATION.

Next, I should like to make, as plainly and explicitly as the English language permits, the declaration that the major part of Dr. Potter's article is based upon nothing more than a causeless fear. Dr. Potter thinks that the modern movement toward State registration of nurses, with the necessary accompaniment of a minimum standard of training, portends a secret flank invasion of the field of medical practice by nurses. He surmises that they have their eyes fixed on this goal, and that their trains are being laid. He sees significant straws, showing the direction of the wind, in certain ominous phrases—"the practice of nursing," the "nursing profession." And he points out that, as some one has said,

autonomy and independence mark the profession as against the calling or trade, and as nurses cannot have autonomy or independence in the sick room, therefore, if they ask for any autonomy or independence at all it means that they are not going to keep their places in the sick room. I am quite sure that, if any physician offered the *Medical Journal* a medical article so full of the traces of superstition as this one about nurses, it would be promptly declined. Let me, from my personal and intimate knowledge during twenty-five years of nurses and nursing affairs both at home and abroad, and as one who has taken a share in all the organisation work of nurses, try to explain to Dr. Potter and to those men of whom he is a type, what nurses really do want. The movement for registration is not a shove forward into the medical sphere; it is not an attempt to get anything new; it is simply and solely an effort to protect a standard of nursing education which we have attained and which time has shown to be a reasonable minimum. Few nurses have any wish to be doctors. Those who have, can, and do, study medicine. The vast majority, however, see in their own work so full and ample a content of satisfaction, interest, and importance that I can say positively they not only have no wish to practise medicine, either openly or surreptitiously, but they have a very definite wish *not* to practise it. In other words, compared with nursing, medicine does not attract them. But what about autonomy and independence? Nurses do claim a human and democratic right to the same share of autonomy and independence that all citizens of a free country may claim. Here I must ask Dr. Potter to discriminate. Nurses do not want this autonomy and independence in the sick room or in the hospital ward or in any branch of their work as nurses. On the contrary, they delight in working under the orders of a medical general whose leadership calls for their every capacity to be put forth to its utmost. It is surprising that Dr. Potter does not realise how impregnable the position of the medical man is as regards the nurse. All he has to do, in order to maintain it, is to fill it in the ethical and professional dimensions. But the nurse does claim autonomy and independence in her social and economic relations as a self-supporting woman and as a member of the human family. She demands them, and she asserts unflinchingly that the subordination due to the medical profession in the practice of nursing does not apply or find place in her life as an individual. When medical men attempt to control the educational processes of the nurse, thus indirectly gaining control of her living con-

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