

nursing demands the sacrifice of all worldly pleasures and interests which is a remnant of the early religious character of nursing. Both these views are fostered by the authorities who like drudges, and can better ignore the gently murmured complaints of the individual than the boldly uttered criticism of an association. Such conditions are partly a result of the system of nurse training, which eliminates all subjects of social importance, and are partly due to the previous education of many nurses, which does not seriously prepare them for the exercise of a profession, as is considered necessary in the case of boys, while girls are led to look forward to marriage. This last fact makes it most difficult to organise women; they certainly work hard and conscientiously while in a profession, but don't consider it as a life task, only a temporary occupation. As to the nurses recruited from the lower classes (and there are a good many, because every girl who has been at school till her twelfth year, is eligible for training), they enter the profession for the most part to gain more money than is possible in service, or to get a higher position in society; these nurses are not sufficiently educated to see the more ethical side of the matter; they have few ideals. Of course, there are exceptions in both groups, really splendid women, working with all their might for the good of the profession; but they are such a small group that all their endeavours to rouse their colleagues to a better understanding of their real interests often seem hopeless. As to the opposition of the medical superintendents of hospitals and asylums this is due to two causes. In the first place, they do not want any State interference in the training of their nurses, which at present is everybody's private business, and they consider it should remain so. In the second place they do not want to give their nurses the broad, full training we want them to have; they don't want first-class women for nurses. And why not? Because a woman who is not very well educated and has not had much teaching at school, whose professional knowledge is not very extensive, is submissive. She looks up to the doctor as to a god; she is his slave; she fawns upon him. Whereas the well-educated gentlewoman strictly obeys medical orders, but also forms her own judgment, and in all matters outside her work feels herself his equal. Here, also, there are exceptions to be found. Amongst medical superintendents of small hospitals, and physicians in private practice, there are broad-minded men, who fully appreciate intelligent, well-trained nurses, women of refined character, but they are powerless to make radical improvements in the present mode of training. The medical superintendents of the large hospitals and asylums are as yet omnipotent. That is the reason of the opposition to State registration from the side of men whose duty should be to do everything in their power to improve conditions.

It seems to me that the same conditions may be observed in other countries. In the *Canadian Nurse* I read a few weeks ago serious complaints of the indifference of the nurses in all matters concerning their profession, and as to that disgraceful affair at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Lon-

don, has it not been caused by the wish of men to retain their power over women?

I have come to the conclusion that for our country at least the only possible remedy is women's suffrage; not only will it confer on women the right to vote, but also the educating, stimulating influence of exercising the suffrage will compel the nurses to take interest in many things besides nursing, it will broaden their minds, and heighten their self-confidence, and their feeling of dignity.

I am working for women suffrage very hard; it is rather a roundabout way to come in touch with the nurses, the hospitals, and asylums, but it seems to me the right one, because the only possible one. A medical superintendent who forbids the membership of our association to his nurses can hardly prohibit their joining the Society for Women's Suffrage, the movement has become too large and too powerful. The dependent position in which all women live nowadays is humiliating. Nurses by reason of their being absolutely dependent on hospital authorities for their training, their examination, their certificate, their credentials (all these being private matters not under State control) are specially submissive, and like the slaves of old they flatter their masters to obtain what they want. Suffrage will be one of the means, and a very powerful one, to develop their feeling of dignity, to arouse in them a proper pride. As long as in the more important things of life the opinion of women is not asked, as long as they are treated like children, the nurses will not realise that they have to take matters in hand themselves in order to obtain improvements, they will submit passively to every authority. But once it is their duty to take their part in the management of public affairs, then the nurses will realise also that good results can only be expected when they themselves work for the improvement of their profession, instead of leaving it to others, to whom the interests of the nursing profession are only of secondary importance.

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)