

which the public very naturally argues, dispute the premises and dislike the conclusion as we may. It rests with Nurses themselves to alter this present state of affairs, or to permit it to continue; because it is notorious that in Private Nursing, for example, the market value of Nursing work is vastly greater than the proceeds which the average Nurse obtains; that whereas the public pay for her services, say, at the rate of £100 to £150 a year, she probably will not receive more than a quarter of the amount. She is, in fact, sweated for the benefit of some charity, or by some mercantile undertaking. If the former, no condemnation is too strong, because oppression under the guise of philanthropy is doubly revolting; for the latter, much may be said in extenuation, and in an open contract, freely made between capital and labour, only the parties thereto are concerned.

But how is any improvement in this direction to be effected? In the first place, we believe—as we have again and again pointed out in these columns—that Registration, by eliminating the amateur and the impostor from the ranks of the calling, will do much towards increasing the public and personal value of the Trained Nurse's work. Next, it is clear that if Hospitals treated their *employées* more reasonably and more generously, outside bodies would be compelled to follow suit. We have shown how the position and the training of the Probationer would necessarily have to be improved if she had paid the Hospital for her education. But her increased advantages neither could nor presumably would end with her term of pupilage, for it is certain that the Matrons, the Sisters, and the Staff Nurses—who each in their grade would be compelled to take a more active part than they do at the present time in teaching and supervising their Probationers—must also be given much more liberal salaries than they now receive. And considering that the Hospitals—as we presume—will for three years have been paid for the work done by their pupils, instead of being called upon, as now, to pay for these services, there can be no dispute that it will be financially possible for, and morally incumbent upon, them to increase by at least one-half the salaries of its then comparatively few paid officials. Imagine, then, the Matron's remuneration raised from £100 to £150; the Sister's from £50 to £75; and the Staff Nurses' from £30 to £45—and a very short calculation will prove that this could be done as we have said, merely from the saving effected by the abolition of payment to the junior ranks—and the full significance of the scheme to Nurses becomes abundantly manifest. And, we would add, another great evidence of its value to the Hospitals themselves and the sick poor within their walls, also becomes apparent.

For the one great reason for the eternal shifting and changing which now takes place amongst Nurses—to the benefit, generally, neither of themselves nor of anyone else—is beyond doubt due to the small salaries which they receive.

If a Nurse, upon obtaining her Certificate, could obtain a Staff appointment in her Training School worth £45 a year, with the prospect of rising to a Sistership there, or a Matronship equally well remunerated elsewhere, a much keener interest in the details of her training would be excited. And once a permanent post was gained, there would be much less desire to go to some other Hospital.

Then we believe—as we have on several occasions stated in these pages—that there will be a greater tendency, as time goes on, for Private Nurses to be segregated together in Homes, either co-operatively controlled by themselves or in connection with the Training Schools. In the former case the worker would obtain her equal share in the common profit, or, taking her own earnings, would pay her quota towards the general expenses, according to the system adopted. In the latter event the increased salaries paid to the workers in the Hospital must necessarily extend to those employed outside; and once more the benefit of the new system would be felt. Then we hope that a new departure will be made, and that instead of the monies derived from the Nursing Department being merged in the general funds of the institution, as now usually happens, they will be kept entirely distinct, and that the surplus each year will be invested to form Pensions for those who continue for a certain time in the service of the Hospital. It only remains to consider the case of District Nurses. How, it may be asked, can their present scanty salaries be much increased, seeing that they are generally defrayed by the contributions of the benevolent? To which we reply that we anticipate a new era for these workers also. It is not so many years ago since the idea that medical men should be paid by each parish to take care of its poor was laughed to scorn. Yet, by law, the custom is now enforced throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom. Nurses are urgently wanted in thousands of parishes to-day, and we feel fairly safe in foretelling that before many years are over, provision will be made by Parliament for their general appointment as parochial officers. The signs of the times are so plain that he must indeed be blind who cannot read them. The success of the British Nurses' Association, and the high public esteem to which it has already achieved, point plainly to the keen comprehension of the thousands of gentlewomen who have joined it, and the essential usefulness of its programme in elevating the education and work of Nurses.

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