

by the maternal instinct, but fifty years ago educated women, alarmed at the conditions of the hospitals, entered hospital wards, with the altruistic motive of purifying and ennobling nursing for the benefit of the sick. While it was true that Miss Nightingale laid down the fundamental principles underlying modern nursing, human evolution, and that of the science of medicine also, exercised a profound influence on the evolution of the art of nursing.

From 1860—1880 there was a tremendous awakening amongst women in regard to the sick and their duty towards them; and really forceful women brought to the profession that wonderful spirit and high idealism which we were now struggling to keep. But for this influx of cultured women the hospitals would never have been cleansed actually and morally. Their pioneer work had its effect, and there flocked into the nursing profession the best women who could be got for the purpose, so that the great difficulty of matrons of hospitals was how to make a selection from the number of good candidates applying for training.

During these years medicine was becoming highly specialised, and nursing had to become specialised also, in order to meet the openings on all sides, and to combat the influences undermining the health of the people.

Mrs. Fenwick then showed that it became apparent that it was absolutely necessary for a profession such as nursing to be properly organised, and that women should come to the hospitals for the special training in nursing which they afforded with a foundation of good general education, and that professional standards should be defined and upheld. She pointed to the history of medicine before and after the organisation of the profession, as an example of what might be accomplished, and instanced the controversy in the House of Commons prior to the passing of the National Insurance Act, in 1911, as an instance of the neglect of the interests of an unorganised class of workers.

She then discussed the Nurses' Registration Bill and its various clauses in detail, and concluded by inviting those present to buy, read, and study the Bill, which presented a concordat of medical and nursing opinion from the three kingdoms, through the delegated representation of medical and nursing societies on the Central Committee for the State Registration of Trained Nurses promoting the Bill. She asked all present to interest themselves in the subject, and to get the

general public to understand how essential it was to their interest that they should have a guarantee that before a nurse could claim the title of Registered Nurse she should have conscientiously passed through an adequate three years' curriculum of training, and that what she had been taught she knew.

Miss Forrest then presented a paper on the registration question, dealing with it chiefly from the point of view of one who has had an extended knowledge of private nurses; and which was so excellent that it will be published in full next week.

Discussion was then invited, when Miss Loyd said that speaking as a member of the public, who had had many nurses, she thought it would be an enormous gain, if the public could know that they, and those dear to them, had as nurses those who had passed through a definite curriculum. Nothing would give greater pleasure and confidence.

Miss Fowler enquired whether Mrs. Fenwick was of opinion that it would assist the cause if women had the Parliamentary vote, and Mrs. Fenwick replied that there could be but one answer—of course it would.

So far there had never been any effort on the part of the public to form themselves into a society to demand State Registration of Nurses. It was a difficult thing for nurses to fight this battle, it cost money, of which they had not a large amount, and moreover, they were not free agents, and only a limited number could come out and fight political campaigns. It was the duty of the

public as well as of nurses to see that this reform was carried through. Why should not a society be formed to influence public opinion? A body of earnest women in every constituency, could do much, and could also influence Members of Parliament in the constituencies.

Dr. Gunton Turner, who spoke with a memory of the transition from old to new methods of nursing at Guy's Hospital, London, said that at first there was a feeling of annoyance in the hospital, and on the part of the medical staff, when the old sisters and nurses were superseded, but they could not but recognize the advantage of the change and were convinced that the new system was the right one.

Nurses should have the support of the medical profession in their demand that those who were not properly qualified should not be accepted by the general public as the equivalent of those who were. The general public were not well informed on the matter, but if Mrs. Fenwick would go



MISS CHRISTINA FORREST.

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