

The first step in the path of Nursing progress, if we may so call it, and one that still more tended to dis sever the two functions of Midwife and Nurse, took place in the early part of the eighteenth century; for about 1746 the Royal Academy of Painters (of whom Sir J. Reynolds was president, and Gainsborough and Constable exhibitors) held its first exhibition of pictures to raise funds to found a Lying-in Hospital for the reception of poor mothers. It was called then, and is now, the British Lying-in Hospital and its doors were open to women from all parts of the Kingdom, and it was the first Institution of the kind in England. A few years later on (in 1752) Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital was established. Of course, Physician and Surgeon-Accoucheurs were appointed to the Lying-in Hospitals, and Nurses required inside, though I cannot be sure that there was at first any idea of instructing them for extern work. Midwifery in the meantime was being rapidly absorbed into the medical profession; but as regards the Lying-in Hospitals, I incline to the opinion that to begin with Midwives derived more benefit from them than Nurses. As time went on these latter were admitted as Pupil Nurses, and for the first time in the history of Midwifery we had in England what we commonly call a professional Monthly Nurse. And here I must impress upon my Nursing hearers that all the successive epochs of Monthly Nursing—if I may so call them—were co-incident with, and the outcome of, changes and advances in Midwifery practice. The Nurse of the seventeenth century was contemporary with the man-Midwife; she of the eighteenth century of the budding Midwifery Medical Practitioner—that is, when instrumental aid was coming into use. The nineteenth century brought with it changes more marked still, influencing not only Monthly Nursing, but the Nurse. We have seen that the middle of the eighteenth century marked the commencement of what we will call Hospitalism in our portion of work. Now what was the first effect of it? I think we shall find this inquiry a matter of much interest. Hospitals, that were the very life of all other Nursing, were almost death to ours; nay, worse than death—dishonour. The cause of this retrogression was to be found in the different conditions under which women entered Lying-in from all other Hospitals; for I need scarcely remind my professional friends that all women engaged in Midwifery, whether as Midwives or Nurses, as a

rule paid their own charges in respect to Hospital expenses, and afterwards entered into practice on their own personal responsibility. They were for the most part elderly women, and many were wives, mothers, or widows. As a rule they never entered a Lying-in Hospital with any thought of remaining there, far less taking service therein; they just went to pick up a certain amount of special knowledge, and were only too anxious to leave the Hospital behind them. They had not, nor felt, any interest in it. They were most of them unsuited to their work, had no aptitude for the study of it, difficult to teach, still more difficult to discipline; and they very often left the Hospital very little wiser than when they entered it, and a great deal more prejudiced; their object was to get to work as soon as possible, not because they were fit for it but because they wanted to get back their expenses.

Now all these conditions are absolutely reversed in every-day Hospital Nurses. They are young women, and unmarried; they enter the Hospital with the intention of doing service therein, a considerable number of them attaching themselves permanently to the Institution they first entered. They do not pay their own fees, nor do they live at their own expense—they work their charges out. Now it is just the measure of these differences that marks the measure of that wide gulf that has separated, and still separates to a large extent, Midwifery from all other Nursing.

With your permission I will give you two illustrations of my meaning. It is easy to multiply instances; but they all come to the same thing in the end, and we will go back for the nonce to the days of our mothers and grandmothers, when the "Monthly" was an "Institution"; she is Institutional now, which is quite another thing. We will begin with the candidate for a Hospital career.

There is Martha, the daughter of a farm labourer, a healthy young lass of eighteen, thinks she would like to be a Nurse. She is familiar with the handsome County Hospital, standing in its pleasant ground; and when her father lay ill with the fever there, she remembered how kind the Nurses were to him, noticed their dapper uniform, rather liked the caps, and has a sort of idea that perhaps some day she should have a jingling chatelaine like some of them at her side to add to her smartness. So Martha applies for a place at the Dampshire as she might for a housemaid's situation at the Squire's, and

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