

And here we should like to emphasise its peculiarly valuable and far-reaching nature. Religious Sisterhoods have always attracted to their ranks women of high ideals and aspirations, whose lives of self-surrender and of devotion to the service of humanity have, throughout the ages, commanded the admiration of the world, and, naturally, the care of the sick is a task to which they have given themselves wholeheartedly.

But the very fact that Religious Communities have for so long undertaken this duty, and that they have had their own established Rule of Life for as long, has made it difficult for them to move with the times; when, with the evolution of scientific medicine, it became evident that nursing must also develop on the same lines, in its own degree. A stimulus was needed, and that stimulus has been found in the movement for State Registration of Nurses which, inaugurated in Great Britain in 1887, now encircles the world. As our readers know, for many of them have helped to attain them, its objects were twofold, the uplifting and standardisation of Nursing Education, and the Registration of those who attain that standard. In this country it required over a quarter of a century of concentrated work so to influence public opinion, and through it the Legislature, before Acts for the Registration of Nurses were placed upon the Statute Book of these

Realms, but the influence of the movement does not stop there. Around the world Nurses are carrying forward the Registration Banner, and, as our readers will have gathered, it has appeared even before the Gates of Rome, and has affected the policy of the Holy See in regard to the Nursing Orders.

Mlle. Chaptal ultimately shared her roses with Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, and that also was a gracious action of historical significance, for the evolution of scientific nursing among the Religious Orders in France is indissolubly bound up with the Registration movement in Britain, a force influencing the world

The Religious Orders have their own special contribution to make to the uplifting of nursing, for once they bring their procedure and practice into conformity with modern

knowledge and practice, take their National State Diploma, and join their National Associations of Nurses, their example of consecration and devotion, of unselfishness and serenity is one which is needed in this materialistic age, when there is a danger lest nurses should be affected by the universal impulse to think that their duty is fulfilled by giving so much service for so much cash received. The

difference between a trade and a profession is that members of the latter are, in honour bound, beyond this, to render services which can never be bought and sold. Human beings broken on the wheel of misfortune and sickness require very tender handling, and this can best be rendered by those who have

"A heart at leisure from itself  
To soothe and sympathise,"  
and pour out their "very precious" ointment without thought of equivalent value.

To have, therefore, within our recognised ranks a body of devoted women diffusing these ideals by the power of example in their daily lives, brings an access of strength to the whole profession, and a living demonstration which nurses who come in contact with it will not soon forget.

We have wandered far from Lake Geneva, or more properly, perhaps, we have wandered round it with the Sisters, for it will be seen from the pictures — which we owe to Miss Gooding, Matron of the Western Hospital, Fulham — that the nurses of to-day are availing themselves

of the opportunity to get into touch with their colleagues who are not "in the world," and that the latter are responding charmingly.

It was indeed an experience for many of the nuns who

had not before been permitted to take such an excursion, and those who are seen looking over the Lake were taken in this position because they were not allowed to have their faces photographed, but did not mind their backs being taken so long as they did not know it was being done.

We welcome to the accredited ranks of the Nursing Profession the State Registered Nun.

Not only in France, but in Spain and other countries there is an awakening as to the need for scientific training for members of Religious Nursing Orders.



A NOVEL EXPERIENCE.



AN ABSORBING CONVERSATION.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)