

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK was, of course, a strong advocate for uniform, which she always wears on duty, and which she liked to see worn with military precision, down to "buttons and straps." It seems that, when Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, she personally measured and cut every yard of cap frilling to ensure exactitude, although she remarked "it must be borne in mind that every head differs in size and shape." It is this thoroughness and attention to what the majority of women call "pettifogging details" that ensures success in these days of mediocrity.

I HAVE read with intense pleasure the unanimous expressions of approbation expressed by the Press of this country at the action of the R.B.N.A. in applying at once to the Privy Council for a Royal Charter. The public are at last realising that the aims of the Association are for their benefit; and, in consequence, the public is with the Royal British Nurses' Association. I have read intelligent and sympathetic notices of the Association's work in *The Lancet*, *Medical Press and Circular*, *Provincial Medical Journal*, most of the dailies and ladies' weeklies, and think the following leader from *The Saturday Review* should be seen by all Nurses, as that Journal is written for and read by the most intelligent of the community:—

"Two facts with regard to Nurses have of late been very forcibly brought home to many households—that the supply is inadequate for periods of special stress, such as that from which, it is to be hoped, we are now emerging, and also that by no means every kindly and well-meaning lady who devotes herself to the task of nursing is competent to fulfil the duties she undertakes at those times when aptitude and readiness of resource are chiefly needed. This latter circumstance can occasion no reasonable surprise. Nursing is essentially a matter of knowledge and experience; and, though, during the last few years, there has been a movement towards the profession on the part of many ladies actuated by the highest motives, and of many others who are prepared conscientiously to devote themselves to gaining a livelihood in this direction, a person bearing the title of Nurse may, or may not, be a valuable addition to the family of an invalid. Nothing can be more important than that an adequate supply of thoroughly competent Nurses should be forthcoming, in the first place, and that, in the second, the public should know precisely where such Nurses are to be found; and for these reasons the Royal British Nurses' Association is an Institution which cannot be too widely known.

"Some five years ago, the ill conceived idea was put in practice of starting a Registry for Nurses, on the same principle as a servants' registry. Girls paid half-a-crown: they were supposed to have had one year's training in some sort of Hospital, and it was assumed—more cheerfully by the possibly well-meaning devisers of the scheme than by those who had a little sad experience of some of the Nurses so 'qualified'—that they were fit to take entire charge of the most serious cases. The system was felt to be both derogatory to the profession of Nurse, and in the highest degree un-

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satisfactory to the patient. The PRINCESS CHRISTIAN, always ready in works of practical kindness, took counsel with a number of the leading Physicians and Surgeons of London and the provinces, and the British Nurses' Association, afterwards graciously commanded by HER MAJESTY the QUEEN to assume the prefix 'Royal,' was the result. Various benevolent projects for the benefit of the Nurses themselves are involved; but with these the public is less directly concerned than with that chief desideratum when illness occurs—the finding of an entirely trustworthy Nurse. Amongst other evidence which was brought to light by the investigations of Lord SANDHURST'S Committee on Hospitals—a Committee which, under his untiring direction, did admirable service—was the fact that, in order to gain pecuniary advantages for some of the establishments which had not the benefit of efficient control, Nurses were sent out possessed of just that little knowledge which is a peculiarly dangerous thing when the question is one of, in many cases, simply life or death. The Executive of the British Nurses' Association wisely hold that not less than a period of three years' Hospital training is sufficient to qualify a Nurse for the delicate and arduous duties she will, in the ordinary course of events, be called upon to fulfil. The Register now contains a roll of over eighteen hundred Nurses so qualified, and the names of some three thousand Members in all; more than one hundred and fifty of the chief Hospitals in the United Kingdom have become supporters, and these numbers are constantly increasing. Over this Register the strictest supervision is, of course, exercised, and the Association has secured to itself the power of expelling a Nurse who may prove unworthy of trust, if any such should unfortunately be found.

"The prosperity of the Association is assured beyond all possibility of doubt by the active interest of the President and other members of the Royal Family, as well as by the many leading representatives of the medical profession who have given their cordial adhesion. Last year, however, a petition presented to the Board of Trade for a licence to incorporate the Association under the Companies' Act, without the word 'Limited,' appears to have been refused, though on what grounds it is impossible even to guess. The reason why the Association desired to be thus incorporated was, that it could more conveniently hold and dispense its funds; the reason why it did not wish to be set forth to the world as 'Limited' was that, in view of the fact of the PRINCESS CHRISTIAN being one of the Founders and also President, and, furthermore, of HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN having commanded the prefix 'Royal,' it was felt that the word 'Limited' would inappropriately class the Association as a trading concern, and so altogether convey a wrong impression about it. The difficulty is, of course, easily overcome in the case of an Institution which speaks with such authority and influence; only it must be added, at the same time, that such a difficulty ought never to have arisen. At a meeting of the Council, held a short time since, a unanimous vote was passed in favour of applying for a Royal Charter, and the President graciously offered to present the petition in her own name, following the example of the PRINCE OF WALES in the case of the Imperial Institute. These details, however, are of no great practical importance to those who only desire to know where, in moments of special need, a Nurse, in whom absolute reliance can be placed, may be discovered, and for this knowledge sincere thanks are due to those to whom we owe the Royal British Nurses' Association."

THE late Sir GEORGE PAGET was rather concise and to the point in giving professional advice. The

DISPOSE OF THE DEAD AS NATURE DIRECTS.—Everyone interested in the reform of funeral abuses should read the brochure published by the London Necropolis Company. It can be had gratis of the Secretary, 2, Lancaster Place, Strand, or 188, Westminster Bridge Road.

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