

ciation of all mere worldly happiness. A hospital was supposed to be a kind of leper-house, whither people saw their friends depart to nurse with trembling as to the unknown horrors that awaited them. Things have changed considerably lately. The profession of nursing is taken gravely into consideration with other means of gaining a livelihood, and there is little opposition to the daughter whose inclination leads her to adopt it. Few large families but have a daughter, sister, or cousin in "hospital work," who, when they come home for their scanty holidays, fire the home-circle with some of that enthusiasm which nurses—and more especially young probationers—feel for "our hospital" and "nursing."

*O tempora, O mores* (?). What would the ghosts of the old nurses of St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's say if they could revisit their old wards and see and hear their successors? Sarah Gamp and Betsy Prig have disappeared, and the younger generation who have taken their place look at the work with very different eyes from their predecessors of forty years ago, while their ward management and nursing, conducted on certain principles regulated by well-defined scientific laws, would be utterly incomprehensible to those departed worthies. Nursing is now an art, is acknowledged to be a branch of the great tree of medical science. The handling, the watching, the feeding, the ventilating, in short the *nursing*, of the sick are granted to be matters whose importance is so great that years must be spent in the acquisition of their proper knowledge. The nurse may now no more apply the law of the rule of thumb to that part of medical and surgical treatment which falls to her share than may the medical man, but must be properly instructed and trained therein.

Hospitals, metropolitan and provincial, are now filled with women who are members of what may justly be called a profession—a profession requiring for its members women of peculiarly suitable character and temperament, trained on a principle that must have for its object not only a scheme of theoretical and practical instruction, that will insure perfection in technical details, but a discipline that will inculcate intelligent obedience and self-denial.

Educated women are not wanting who are willing to undergo this training, which is often irksome in its details, often trying to the health, but wonderfully compensating, as shewn by the keen interest that, in common with all scientific pursuits, is engendered in its followers.

The "trained hospital nurse" is now a recognised factor in the treatment of disease in private life—a factor of immense importance in all those cases, medical or surgical, where the patient's life depends on hourly skilful treatment and careful appreciation of detail. Such nurses—nurses who take a keen interest in their work, who leave no stone unturned

that patience or skill can move to save their patient's life, who understand and are therefore able intelligently to fulfil the medical man's orders—are simply his invaluable *aides-de-camp*, his right hands. But what shall we say of those ignorant women who, with inadequate, insufficient training and semi-knowledge, pass themselves off on the public as "trained nurses"?—women who would be comparatively harmless if recognised as ignorant and well-meaning, but who become positively dangerous if, classed as skilled nurses, they have duties and responsibilities assigned to them which they are totally unfitted to fulfil. Such women, especially if gifted with a glib tongue and pleasant manner, do an immense amount of harm by exciting misplaced confidence and trust.

The curriculum pursued by probationers training for nurses at our best London and county training schools, and at many smaller country hospitals, is excellent and thorough. The heads are themselves trained nurses, and many of them come fully up to Florence Nightingale's description of what the head of a training school should be—"herself the best nurse in the place, the model of all her nurses would wish to be."

But besides these schools for nurses where every opportunity is given them for thoroughly learning their profession, there are other institutions whose methods are far less complete, where little time or attention is given to their training, but where they none the less receive a certificate, after a short and often very insufficient test, as "hospital trained nurses."

Many good hospitals, who otherwise train their nurses well, lend themselves to the inefficient training of nurses, especially those intended for private work, by taking women for very short periods of training on the payment of so much a week. I have not infrequently heard a nurse say, "Oh, I went to such and such a hospital for three months, just to get the *name* of having been there." Such a nurse would have to pass no real test as to her efficiency before starting on a private nursing career. All these inefficient, half-trained women bear the same name, and are not in any way distinct from those who have passed a thorough and careful training.

The title of "trained nurse" is now, therefore, only an ambiguous term, conveying no meaning, or often an erroneous and incorrect notion, to the listener.

When a man is stated to be a doctor, it is understood that he has passed certain legally recognised examinations, and has gone through a certain legally recognised course of training to fit him for the duties of his profession when he holds the legal status of a medical man. When a woman states that she is a certificated governess, we know that she holds certain legal evidence of having passed recognised

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