

modern trained nurse; and for the introduction of this system of skillful, trained nursing, with all its untold benefits, the Profession of Medicine and the world at large must forever remain under a load of obligation to the great founder of the system, Miss Florence Nightingale. The trained nurse has become almost as necessary in the treatment of the sick as the doctor himself, and if in serious or prolonged illness the two go not hand in hand, much unnecessary suffering and many preventible deaths must be the inevitable consequences.

But though our larger hospitals and certain classes of the community in this country are being well served by our present system of trained nursing, we can scarcely be said to be much beyond the threshold of our necessities or of our possibilities in this matter. As matters now stand, by far the most numerous classes of our people are quite out of reach of help from our trained nurses, and until this want is supplied they must continue to suffer and to die, much as if no system of trained nursing existed in the country. I say this without imputing blame to any one. It is probably nobody's fault, but it is a national misfortune, and one which should not, and indeed must not, be beyond the reach of remedy. The hospitals have been doing their utmost in training nurses up to the full measure of their capacity and the means at their disposal, but the process is a slow one, and, so far at least as the nurses themselves are concerned, is attended with considerable expenditure of time, anxiety and money before they find themselves in a position to earn a bare livelihood. Moreover, their duties are arduous and exacting, and their necessary expenses constant and considerable, while their emoluments are fluctuating and uncertain; and to make ends meet their scale of fees must be such as to place their services beyond the reach of all but persons of ample means, to whom the additional expenditure of a few dollars a day during a lengthened illness, causes little or no inconvenience.

But these people of ample means form but a small minority of our whole population, and what is to become of those much more numerous classes, the people with limited incomes, both in the cities and outlying districts, and the poor in their own

homes, whose needs in the matter of nursing help are quite as urgent, but whose means are quite inadequate to supply them under existing conditions? Are they to be left to sicken and to die without help, or to look longingly and enviously, or with thoughts that are apt to grow dangerous, upon their more prosperous neighbors? God forbid! It is to supply the needs of such as these that Her Excellency proposes to establish the Victorian Order of Nurses, whose duty and whose privilege it shall be, under skilled direction, and supported as it will be by a generous public when its needs are made known, to extend to every class of the community throughout the length and breadth of our land, those valuable and health-giving services which should be the perquisite of the poor as well as of the rich.

And this is no impossibility. What has been done elsewhere can be done here. Ten years ago the situation in Great Britain was almost exactly the same as it is here today. The great hospitals and the well-to-do classes had their trained nurses, while the great middle class, with moderate means, and the poor in their homes, were fain to struggle and to suffer, as they had always done, without them. The Jubilee Order of Queen's Nurses, established by Her Majesty in 1887, has supplied this great want, and there are today upwards of six hundred of these nurses doing valuable work in every part of the United Kingdom, and their number is constantly increasing.

So let it be, with necessary modifications, in this country. Let not the reproach be cast upon us that we continue to train nurses only for the rich, and that those who are not rich must not hope to be helped in that way even in their direst need. That reproach must not, shall not, rest upon this country. It must be wiped away before it becomes a stain upon our fair Escutcheon, and every dweller in the land, whether in the palaces of the rich or in the humblest hovel in the wilderness, must be made to feel that he is within reach of that skilled help in his sore need, which should be the birthright of every citizen of our great Empire.

It is not for me, nor is this the occasion, to enter upon the details of this great scheme. It is in safe hands and the work connected with it