

Home by munificently remitting the interest due upon her loan—a sum of nearly £100 a year.

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A DRAMATIC Entertainment will be given in aid of the Home of Rest for Nurses at Queen's Gate Hall, Harrington Road, South Kensington, on Thursday and Friday, January the 24th and 25th, full particulars of which will shortly be given in this Journal.

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At the late meeting of the Asylums Board, the Nursing Staff Committee submitted a scheme for the engagement of untrained women as Probationers at the Board's Fever Hospitals, and recommending its adoption experimentally at the Western Hospital. We are glad to report, however, that members of the Western Committee objected to the discussion as the subject had not been brought before them—the personal approval of the Chairman to the scheme having only been granted. Mrs. LAWRIE, in seconding an amendment that the subject should be postponed for six months, wisely remarked that their Nursing staff would not approve of the proposal, and it would be unwise to introduce a new class of women who could go forth into the world with the stamp of the Asylums Board as Fever Nurses, when they had not one tittle of knowledge of general Hospital work. The Hon. MAUD STANLEY, in strongly supporting the proposal, argued somewhat irrelevantly that, owing to the over-crowding of applicants for training as Nurses in the general Hospitals, St. Bartholomew's had initiated competitive examinations, and that the scheme before the Board would provide the stepping-stone to hundreds of women anxious to adopt Nursing as a profession. Miss BAKER opposed the scheme, because they would, if they adopted it, be crowding London with semi-trained Nurses, who would eventually be left with nothing to do.

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To be of any true value, the nursing of fever cases should be learnt after at least two years' work in a general Hospital, and it is to be hoped the Asylums Board will not sanction a scheme which would be disastrous for the inmates of the Institutions under their charge, and fatal as an educational course for Nurses. Rather let the Fever Hospitals co-operate with the large Nurse-training schools, and, by a system of exchange of Probationers, both the Nurses and patients, and ultimately the general public would be immensely benefited.

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IN the discussion, in the Press, of the trouble which has arisen between the Matron and Medical Superintendent at the Lewisham Infirmary, the public must not lose sight for a moment of the fact, that under the existing Regulations of the Local Govern-

ment Board, friction is almost inevitable between these officers, because no man of science can be a domestic expert and a despot. Pending the decision of the Local Government Board Inquiry, we would advise all interested in Poor Law administration to obtain and read Miss LOUISA TWINING's excellent monograph on "Women's Work, Official and Unofficial," in which they will find the following significant paragraph which bears upon the principle involved:—

"Nowhere was the need of improvement more sorely felt than in the Workhouses and Poor-Law Infirmeries of our land, because the state of things was so far worse than in the Hospitals. There, at least, publicity was in some measure a check upon evil, and the eyes of the best of medical men were upon the proceedings; patients who came and went were free to tell of the treatment they received, and governors and subscribers might be expected to hear of it. But none of these checks existed in the case of the thousands of the sick and incurable and dying poor in the Workhouse Wards. The complaints of 'paupers' would hardly be listened to, and the over-worked medical officer, and his masters, the Guardians, did not suggest a remedy. The 'feminine element' in these Institutions being too often the one paid Matron, reform was hardly likely to enter from within. Of what we call 'Nursing' at the present day, there was none thirty years ago. The inmates who had the physical capacity of strength performed the duties, entirely, without regard to character or knowledge. Great as has been the advance in this department of Nursing (greater, perhaps, than in any other, because the starting point was so exceptionally low), we have not yet attained to all we desire. Women of higher position and training must come forward to serve in these our State Hospitals throughout the metropolis, as well as in the Workhouses and smaller Infirmeries scattered through the country, for we need a higher tone in them all. Those who have served in subordinate posts in Workhouses must not be placed in charge of the sick, nor put in authority over Trained Nurses. We also desire to see women take their due place in command over the female staff, and with responsibility for their control, and not, as too often at present, be regarded as 'housekeepers' only, no allusion being made even to their supervision of the Nursing arrangements. When these new Institutions were started, and rules framed, many years ago, women had not taken the part they now claim in the working of them, and the medical superintendent (always a young man), was the one person of education and authority on the staff. But we look forward to many beneficial changes in the future, brought about by conviction and experience, when the position of the Matron of these large Institutions will not be (as it is said to be now) 'exactly what the medical superintendent likes to make it.' As things are at present, the most superior women, whom we require, will hardly come forward for these posts."

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THE event of the week has been the Conference between the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association and the Irish members of the General Medical Council, which took place at the Offices on Saturday last. Her Royal Highness the President presided, and much interesting information was elicited on both sides. The Irish members expressed themselves in entire unison with the aims of the Association, and expressed a hope that within a short period an Irish Branch of the Association would be formed, in spite of many difficulties which we in England have not had to

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