

Nursing profession, a fact which redounded to the great benefit and *prestige* of the Council.

It will be remembered that, by the most questionable proceedings of the then officials, in 1895 *ex-officio* matrons were deprived of the seats on the General Council offered to, and accepted by, them when they founded the Association. There were one or two persons, at that time, who attempted to salve their own consciences and palliate the breach of faith at which they were assisting, by asserting that this exclusion of the matrons "would only be for one year"; and there were, at that time, some independent members who really believed that the officials were acting in enforced compliance with the bye-laws; and argued that the *ex-officio* matrons would certainly be replaced upon the Council in 1896. It caused those persons, therefore, considerable astonishment to find, when Mr. Fardon produced the official list recommended for the General Council last year, that these ladies' names were conspicuous by their absence; and that, in fact, the Nurses had been, once more, deliberately deceived. At the same time, their comprehension was still further lightened by the dishonourable proceeding of packing the General Council with Nurses from the Middlesex Hospital, who were under the control of officials of the Association.

We understand that, in due course, public attention is to be called to the methods of management of a public Institution which permits such proceedings to be possible. We refer to this matter at this moment because there is a possibility—and perhaps for the last time—that the deplorable policy pursued by the officials for the last three years may be corrected, without further publicity and discredit to themselves as well as to the Association. All honourable members demand that the pledges of the Association shall be kept, that the *ex-officio* matrons shall be replaced on the General Council, and that body made, once more, representative of the whole Association and of the whole Nursing profession, and not, as now, representative only of the official *clique* and of fourth-rate Institutions. If that step were taken, it is possible that the past mistakes might be forgotten, and that the Association might be enabled to carry out the various great measures which are necessary for the proper development of the Nursing profession, and for the protection of the public. Otherwise, we have reason to believe that those measures will be carried out by some other body.

Lectures on Elementary Physiology, in relation to Medical Nursing.

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LECTURE V.—THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

(Continued from page 227.)

A CONDITION which is very often associated with diseases of the nervous system is that of drowsiness which may pass into more or less complete insensibility, and to which the name of *Stupor* is given. It is very frequent after injuries to the head and may follow the loss of consciousness which is a common symptom of such accidents. On the other hand, it may precede the insensibility which so frequently occurs in cases where the brain is subject to some unnatural compression by an effusion of blood or from any other cause.

In any case, the stupor is due to, what may be called, a benumbed condition of the brain, and therefore the symptom is significant of serious mischief and always requires most careful attention. Stupor is not invariably caused by injuries or even by that disease of the blood vessels which, as we have already seen, either brings about the formation of a clot in the vessels, or of a rupture through their wall and the escape of blood upon the surface of the brain. In various diseases, in which the poisonous products formed by the body are not properly thrown off, their accumulation in the blood undoubtedly either leads to similar brain disturbance, or has an irritating effect upon the nerve centres. For example, in cases of jaundice, when the bile does not properly pass off from the body, it is very common to find the patient suffering from extreme drowsiness amounting in many cases almost to stupor. Or again, in cases in which the kidneys are not able efficiently to throw off the necessary amount of urea, this substance, as we have already seen in previous lectures, accumulates in the blood; and then we find the patient show a condition of drowsiness deepening into stupor and finally into coma. Or, on the other hand, the irritating effects of the poison may set up so much excitement in the nerve cells as to cause the convulsions which are so typical of *Uræmia*. Then, again, there are poisons which, if taken into the body, show themselves by their benumbing influence upon the brain; and of these Opium is perhaps the best known example.

It is both interesting and important to note

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)