

be placed is given by a proposal now before a Scottish Town Council. Every infectious disease is probably due to a micro-organism, although the bacillus for every disease has not yet been discovered. But, in a great many cases, the organism is well known; and in such diseases as diphtheria and typhoid fever, it is all important, as soon as possible, to discover the specific germ in order not only to make the diagnosis of the disease certain, but also to take immediate measures to prevent its extension. Under these circumstances, it has become customary in many towns to have a proper examination made in all suspected cases for the discovery of the suspected bacillus; and in many instances the work has proved to be eminently economical in saving the expense of an epidemic. It is, therefore, the more strange to find that any public body at the present day should be doubtful of the usefulness as well as the advantage of instituting a department for such investigations. It is very poor economy to save a few shillings and be consequently unprepared with scientific methods of combating diseases which may cause the loss both in life and hard cash of many thousands of pounds.

ROYAL FREE WASHING.

PUBLIC attention has been directed by our able and influential contemporary, the *Daily Mail*, to the manner in which a patient has been treated at the Royal Free Hospital in Gray's Inn Road. A gentlewoman sustained a severe accident in the neighbourhood, and it is stated that she was admitted into the receiving room at that institution—a room with stone benches and floor, but no fire—that after ten minutes, and again half an hour later, she was examined by young gentlemen, but nothing more was done, and for two hours she was kept sitting on a stone bench, without further attention, and in extreme pain; that she was then removed to a ward and her hair vigorously washed and carefully combed—the comb being ostentatiously examined by the nurse for entomological specimens! that she was then stripped and washed from head to foot; but all this time nothing whatever was done for the serious fracture and dislocation from which she was suffering! Finally, some hours later, she wisely insisted on leaving the hospital, and was removed home, when she received proper surgical attention. If these facts are true, and they do not appear to be denied, it will be universally felt that they

reflect the gravest discredit on the Royal Free Hospital; they exhibit a callous indifference to human suffering and a ridiculous lack of common sense. At other hospitals, nurses are instructed in the humane care of their patients, and are not taught to be mere scrubbing machines. A hospital is not a public wash-house, and nurses are something more than bath attendants.

Nursing Politics.

A PUSILLANIMOUS POLICY.

AT last a medical paper, though merely a provincial monthly, has ventured to express an opinion on the Royal British Nurses' Association scandals, with which the daily press has been ringing at intervals for the past twelve months. Dr. Dolan in the *Scalpel* makes the following remarks:—

"Everyone must wish that the Royal British Nurses' Association may soon ride into less troubled waters. Undoubtedly the officials have the interest of the nursing profession at heart, and though some disappointment may be felt by Mrs. Fenwick, as one of the original founders, yet we think the time has come for wiser counsel and for an end to the paper warfare carried on in the *Nursing Journal*. We have in our time founded many movements, others have reaped the fruit, and after a few years new workers have come in, and we, with other original founders, have been pushed on one side, but this does not matter so long as the work went on in which we were interested. The husbandman plants trees to benefit future generations, under whose shade he will never ever sit, but this does not prevent him from planting. The majority having decided in favour of new Bye-Laws, the minority must or should submit, with the best grace possible, for the good of the cause."

IN our humble opinion it is not only the duty of the good husbandman to "plant trees"—his duty does not end here—he must also be prepared to tend and prune his saplings—if he wishes them to bear good fruit. Having planted, as Founder, the Royal British Nurses' Association, we are now engaged in protecting our little plant from the attacks of injurious elements and destructive forces, and although it is not probable that "we shall never ever" rest under the protecting shade of its future growth, we don't intend that the "worm" of jobbery, or the "rust" of obstruction shall "corrupt," so long as we have power to prevent it. We feel absolutely no "disappointment" that the present officials should have attempted to remove our name from the Councils of the Royal British Nurses' Association, the insult would have been to be classed among their elect. But we decline to accept Dr. Dolan's assumption that we are actuated by personal motives in protesting against what is unjust and injurious to nurses and nursing. We are fighting

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