

intellect, the more easily she will be trained to be an efficient nurse.

Nevertheless, I strongly disapprove of putting too high the demands concerning the general education. My opinion is, that a girl with a sound and clever mind, who has remained at school till her fourteenth or fifteenth year, without neglecting afterwards what has been taught her there, is not at all unfit for receiving a training as nurse, when she answers at the same time the demands for character, health, and age. Where there is a choice between two persons, whose qualifications are otherwise equal, but of whom the one has had a higher education, while the other has only had primary instruction, then surely the former will be preferred to the latter.

In cases where the nurse is not only expected to take care of the sick, but also to have a blessed influence on her patient, or to be a cheerful companion and entertainer, it is of much importance that she is his equal in general development. In cases, however, where the greatest stress is laid upon the nursing duty, and companionship is a subordinate matter, a girl from the lower class of society may be the right person in the right place, although it remains a most desirable thing that the nurse is entitled to be called well-bred and is of a good mental development. It is wrong to believe that all highly distinguished ladies equally desire their nurses to be of good breeding. "I am fully content, when the nurse keeps punctually to the instructions of my medical man," we often hear.

The question has arisen, whether it is an urgent necessity that our mental nurses in the lunatic asylums should have good breeding and good education. Most happily the answer need not be, in general, positively affirmative. A most decisive "Yes!" would include the depressing verdict, that mental nursing in our country is not at all what it ought to be—not the very shadow of it. Notwithstanding the small number of well-bred and educated women who have as yet given themselves to mental nursing, many recovered lunatics prove to be full of praise for the way in which they have been cared for. As a fixed rule, however, the mental nurse must be the equal of her patients in the amount of education and good manners that was their part in former days of mental health, and she must always be the superior of her patients of low education. I should think it very wrong and unjust to exclude girls of the lower class from every opportunity of being trained as nurses. The statutes of the London Hospital, an excellent training-school, begin as follows: "Ladies and suitable women of every class can be received as regular probationers." In the issue of May, 1898, of the *Zeitschrift für Kranken-pflege*, Dr. Hensgen mentions the fact, that in Baden and in the Kreis Seigen, very good results have been obtained in district-nursing in the country with nurses, who were not by any means entitled to call themselves "gebildet." Dr. Hensgen gives, as his opinion, that the amount of "Bildung" is of less importance than so many other indispensable factors: love of nursing as a profession, punctuality and a strong sense of duty.

When the day comes, that in Holland in each hospital and in each lunatic asylum the head nurses and first nurses are liberally educated women, so that the nursing-staff itself contains suitable persons for occupying the higher ranks, we shall have every reason to be glad and thankful.

(To be continued.)

Dress and Discipline.

THE question of an outdoor uniform for nurses is not so unimportant as it may seem to the casual observer, and nurses will certainly not be wise to lightly discard this official badge of their profession. The advantages of a professional dress were very noticeable in the recent Græco-Turkish War, when the uniforms worn by the Nursing Sisters gave them at once a status and official position which it would have been difficult for them to obtain in any other way. Again, there is no doubt that the fact of the nurses who belong to an institution wearing the same uniform, creates a feeling of *esprit de corps* which is a valuable factor in maintaining a high standard. It is Charles Kingsley who noticed the effects upon the village lads of Eversley, of enlisting in the army. Talk to such a lad on his return home, and the chances are that he will eagerly introduce a subject he has reason to be proud of—"my regiment," and the honour of his regiment which he feels to be his own, is at the same time his delight and his safeguard. The effect is much the same with nurses, and their appreciation of their responsibility to "my hospital," or better still "my profession," is undoubtedly increased by their wearing the symbol of their calling.

The choice of a uniform, therefore, is an important one, and if nurses are free to choose their own, they will be glad to know where tasteful uniform, at a modern price may be obtained.

DEBENHAM AND FREEBODY.

MESSRS. DEBENHAM AND FREEBODY, of Wigmore Street, have here, for some years, had a special department for providing Nurses' Uniforms, and many large institutions, both at home and abroad, procure the entire nursing outfit from this well-known firm. A catalogue is issued, with sketches and prices, so that nurses living in the country, by procuring it, can select every detail of dress according to taste. The "Dorcas" cloak, with a cape, is an admirable shape, as it provides double warmth over the chest, and leaves the nurse's arms free to help her patient. We approve bonnets without veils, because good gossamer is expensive and also perishable, and to wear these flowing in good condition costs a considerable amount. The "Mildred" cap is pretty and simple. The cuffs, at 6d. a pair, are made to slip over the sleeve and button on at the wrist, and are neat without being obtrusive. For washing-gowns French Cambric, we find, wears better than linen, which cuts with friction and does not keep its colour in the wash. The cambric has also the advantage of being less costly. The Irish linen, of which the aprons are made, is quite a speciality at Messrs. Debenham & Freebody's. The aprons run in price from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 11d.—the latter being of

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