

Annotations.**THE BEGUM NURSE.**

A LOVE of jewellery seems inborn in woman-kind, and there are few persons who have visited the secluded women of the East who will ever forget the display which met their gaze when ushered into the presence of an Oriental woman. Sitting on a mat in a courtyard, enclosed by four high walls, in which are no windows, and attended by obsequious slaves, an Eastern woman is literally loaded with jewellery. In her nose is a jewelled ring, in her ears are many rings, on her arms and ankles are massive golden bracelets and anklets profusely studded with jewels. Thus she sits, idling through the livelong day, awaiting the pleasure of "my lord." We do not in this country load our persons so liberally with jewels, but the barbaric instinct dies hard in us, and often the Begum crops up. For instance, what can be a more charming costume than a neat and pretty nursing uniform, a dress eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is designed. The dainty cotton frock, the spotless apron and cap, and the irreproachable collar and cuffs fresh from the washtub, have indeed proved such a becoming costume, that they have been adopted by many outside the nursing profession. When, however, to this eminently businesslike and professional costume are added articles of jewellery, the effect is as unpleasing and incongruous as it is unsuitable. The instinct of the Begum is entirely out of place in the working woman. We are therefore pleased to see that the Camberwell Guardians, following the custom of all good training schools, prohibit superfluous jewellery, and though they have lost the services of a nurse owing to the enforcement of this rule, we do not doubt that the vacancy so caused will be more appropriately filled by one of quieter tastes in the matter of dress.

ENCOURAGING CRUELTY.

THE Commissioners in Lunacy recently prosecuted an Asylum Nurse, named Alice Preece, for cruelly ill-treating and assaulting two female patients in Hoxton House Asylum. The case was heard at the Worship Street Police Court. Evidence was given that the nurse on October 6th took a patient to the bath room and there whipped her with a cane; on the 13th October another patient was taken to the bath room by the same nurse, and there caned upon the hands. It was not until the 9th

of December that the fact that the defendant was using a cane became known. The Commissioners in Lunacy prosecuted, and the nurse pleaded guilty to the charge. The magistrate in fining the defendant forty shillings in each case, and four shillings costs, said that patients in lunatic asylums should be treated with every possible kindness. There was no doubt that they were at times exceedingly troublesome, and he allowed the defendant the full benefit of the Act by imposing the lowest penalty allowed. We deplore this view because cases in which Asylum patients are ill-treated by attendants are by no means uncommon, as is unmistakably evidenced by the last Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy. It would therefore seem that a sentence should be given which would act as a deterrent to other attendants when a case is brought into the courts. In the present instance there seem to have been no extenuating circumstances. The woman had been in charge of these unfortunate patients for 2½ years; she was evidently in the habit of using the cane, and she could not control her temper. It is difficult, therefore, to see on what grounds "the lowest penalty" was inflicted.

THE NECESSITY FOR NURSING REGULATIONS.

THE drowning of a child in a bath at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, draws attention to the fact that it should be a most strict rule in all hospitals that patients should never be left alone in the bath for a moment. Female patients should be bathed by a nurse, and men by a male attendant, while, in the case of children, the rule, necessary at all times, is doubly imperative. In the case to which we refer, a probationer in her second year was in charge of a ward of thirteen children at night, and it was her duty to bathe all the children who were well enough to be taken to the bath-room before the day nurses came on duty at seven o'clock. We may here notice that the Radcliffe Infirmary must be under-nursed for it to be possible for a nurse in her second year to be left in sole charge of a ward, and for it to be necessary for her to leave the ward unattended while she washed children in the bath-room. We do not hold this probationer primarily responsible, indeed we feel sincere sympathy for her, but we think that definite instructions should be drawn up and enforced by the Matron, and that the Committee, by their regulations, should make it impossible for such a catastrophe to recur.

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