

recognize that the Superintendent of Nurses must exercise her judgment as to signing of certificates, unless she is a mere machine, writing to order. As the head of the nursing staff entrusted with their education in practical nursing, her responsibility is great, and her signature of proportionate value on their certificates. This the nurses at the Croydon Infirmary recognize, for they have sent in a petition to the Board, remonstrating against the fact that their certificates will not in future be signed by the Matron.

* * *

To act courageously, in these days, is at no time an easy matter, but if—whenever a Matron has the courage to perform her duty to her profession and the public—the duties of her office are to be taken from her and handed over to the Medical Superintendent, in conjunction with her subordinate Ward Sisters, then the position of Superintendent of Nurses becomes a farce, and the Local Government Board will find it difficult in the future to obtain suitable Matrons for their Infirmaries, which means that the sick will suffer. The Ward Sisters of this Infirmary would do well to decline in a body to accept the position proposed.

* * *

BEYOND the skill which she is taught in her professional work, a most important part of a nurse's training is the discipline to which she is subjected, and without which she can never attain to a high standard of work. Unquestionably the personal discipline of women must be in the hands of women. The low standard both of work and of morality in hospitals and infirmaries before the nursing schools were organized by educated women, is notorious. No less an authority than Miss Nightingale protested, eight and twenty years ago, against the arrangement—then not an unusual one—of placing the control of female nurses in the hands of male medical officers, as follows:—"There is a somewhat higher average care of the sick, and no morality at all, but an awful destruction of both life and soul, among nurses where both nurses and hospital are under the same secular (male) authority."

* * *

At the present time, in the nursing schools of our hospitals and infirmaries, where the Matron is entrusted with requisite power for the enforcement of discipline, the tone is so high that parents do not hesitate to send into them their most carefully sheltered daughters. Are we to revert to the times when nursing had sunk so low as to be regarded as a profession to be avoided by all respectable women? The question is one which hinges largely on the authority

committed to the Matrons. There is a growing disposition in some directions to deprive the Matrons of their rightful authority and to make them more or less figure heads. The consequences are invariably disastrous. No greater cruelty can be inflicted on any person than to hold him or her responsible without bestowing upon him the power necessary to the due performance of his work, and the quality of the women willing to accept the positions of Superintendents of Nurses will, if such a line be adopted, inevitably deteriorate, as the best women will not consent to occupy posts in which it is impossible to perform what they know to be their duty.

* * *

WE hope that the Local Government Board will see the necessity for upholding Miss Julian in her position as Superintendent of Nurses at the Croydon Infirmary. It must be remembered that their decision will affect not only this Infirmary, and its Matron, but all the Poor Law Infirmaries in the country, both now and in the future.

* * *

THE final examinations for third year nurses at the Royal United Hospital, Bath, were held on 9th and 11th inst. respectively. Seven nurses presented themselves for examination, all of whom passed successfully. To Nurse Rose Kember was awarded the gold medal, and to Nurse Ida Nash the silver medal, both the gift of the President, the Rev. E. Handley. The examiners, selected from the Senior Staff of the Hospital, were, for this year, E. J. Cave, Esq., M.D., and T. D. Ransford, Esq., F.R.C.S.

* * *

THE opening ceremony of the new Central Home for District Nurses in Liverpool, which has been presented to the city by Mr. B. W. Levy, and the "David Lewis" Trust, took place last Friday in a marquee adjoining the Home. Mr. Levy presided, and a large number of those interested in the work were present. The Chairman presented to the Lord Mayor, as ex-officio president of the institution, the deeds conveying the freehold of the property, and the Lord Mayor, in responding on behalf of the Liverpool Queen Victoria District Nursing Association, gratefully accepted the deeds which represented the new building.

* * *

WE regret that, in our last issue, in the list of the new members of the League of St. Bartholomew's nurses, the name of Mrs. Wilson should have appeared *née* Carson, and Mrs. Gilbert Smith *née* Eames. The reverse is the case—Mrs. Wilson was formerly Miss Eames, and Mrs. Gilbert Smith Miss Carson.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)