

"It is not difficult," says our contemporary, "for any person to acquire the requisite knowledge of the technique, but certain personal characteristics in the masseur or masseuse are absolutely necessary. Sir William Bennett, in speaking to the Society of Trained Masseuses, referred at length to the absolute necessity that the person who undertakes to administer massage must be physically fit for the task. He rightly suggested that physicians who have had extended experience in the use of massage must have found many times that the masseuse has had a depressing effect upon the patient owing to her own personal peculiarities; and he no less rightly explained the existence of such attendants by pointing out that there are a large number of philanthropic people in the world who are always anxious to assist, either by advice or pecuniary help, others who are in less fortunate circumstances than themselves. Ill-directed kindness has led to the position. Many women who have failed in other callings, generally from ill-health or want of strength, or even some physical deformity, have been sent by philanthropic friends to receive a course of instruction in massage with a view to the gaining of a livelihood. The launching of such persons into the calling of massage is, we maintain, unfair to the individuals themselves, because they cannot possibly succeed; it is unfair to the general body of those who practise massage; and it is especially unfair to any patients who may happen to fall into the hands of persons quite unsuitable to carry out the treatment prescribed. If there is one quality more essential than another in those who practise massage it is that they should be able to exercise a wholesome, invigorating influence upon the patients; but if the masseur or masseuse be the victim of an obvious physical defect or be in bad health an exactly opposite effect can hardly be avoided. A similar result will also follow if the masseuse be wanting in the ordinary amount of tact and kindly feeling towards the patient whom she is asked to attend."

Steps are being taken to secure to the poor of Sparkhill, a suburb of Birmingham, the services of a fully qualified district nurse, and a meeting was held last week to consider the question, when a strong committee was elected. It was estimated that to carry out the scheme about £120 per annum would be required. Miss Richmond, the much esteemed Matron of the Women's Hospital, Sparkhill, was appointed Hon. Secretary.

The Committee of Inquiry appointed to investigate the circumstances in connection with the administration of marking ink instead of meat

juice to two patients at the Bromsgrove Infectious Hospital have now made their report. They are of opinion that both the nurse who administered the ink and the one who put it into a beef extract bottle were to blame, and they also thought blame attached to the Matron, who it appeared was cognisant of the fact that the bottle had been used for the purpose for the past nine months. It was decided to request the Matron and the nurse concerned to resign. It was stated that the nurse who administered the dose of ink had already left.

The Committee of the Nurses' Home, Newcastle-on-Tyne, at the close of the last year divided amongst the nursing staff the sum of £581 16s. 8d. in bonuses. This indicates both that the work of the Home under the able superintendence of Miss Emery commands increasingly public respect and support, and also that the Committee recognise that the money earned by the nurses is held in trust for them, and should be divided amongst them after the expenses are paid. This is a sound basis, and we wish the Home increasing success and prosperity in the future.

The *Cape Times* publishes a photograph of Miss Back, a Transvaal heroine, who displayed the greatest courage during a desperate fight in the Western Magaliesberg in July, 1900.

General Baden-Powell, in a letter to the Chief of the Staff at Pretoria, extolled the gallant conduct of Miss Back, the step-daughter of a farmer who was a corporal in Methuen's Horse in 1885. She rode for medical help and dressed the wounds of wounded soldiers under heavy fire.

The Johannesburg Nurses' Co-operation Society held an "At Home" at Mrs. James Shephard's residence, Tarland House, recently, when there was a representative gathering of ladies and gentlemen. After refreshments had been served, the company adjourned to the billiard room and held a meeting. Mrs. J. G. Currey, President of the Society, occupied the chair. Mr. Brakhan, in opening the proceedings, said that a house in Von Brandis Square had been rented by the Society, and the funds would be fairly strengthened, as a number of lady nurses had joined the Society. Doctors in the town, seeing the advisability of having such an institution, had promised to support it. It was their intention to have a dance or some other entertainment during Coronation week for the purpose of raising funds. Those present formed themselves into a committee to carry out the preliminary arrangements.

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