

conduct of business of the institution of which she is an official. Surely it is time for Matrons who offend in this respect to recognize, even if they are "not acquainted with the usages of polite society," which would certainly prompt them to answer courteous invitations and official letters, that part of their duty, as paid officers of public institutions, is to attend to the correspondence addressed to them in their official capacity, and that if they neglect this they are neglecting duties which they are paid to discharge. Although hospital secretaries are not free from the same fault, we are bound to say that the Matrons are the greater offenders in regard to a neglect of correspondence, and it is, as a rule, much easier to get a reply from the secretary's than from the Matron's office. Hospital Matrons are, we know, busy people; but this is the more reason why their correspondence should not be allowed to get into arrears. We know one Matron who makes it a rule always to answer the letters addressed to her the same day, and who says that in no other way could she conduct her business. It would be well for the institutions with which they are connected, and it would be certainly a convenience to the public, if all Matrons took the same view of their official duties.

Annotations.

SHOULD NURSEMAIDS WEAR TRAINS?

The top of an omnibus is a vantage ground from which many phases of the life which seethes round one may be studied. One aspect of it, which is of considerable interest, may be well observed from the Marble Arch and onwards along the Bayswater Road—the effect of the costume of nursemaids on the well-being of their tiny charges. Many nursemaids, with the advent of warmer weather, have donned white piqué dresses, which clear the ground and are clean and hygienic; but many more wear grey beige, or other woollen material, and the dresses are made with trains, the result being either that one hand must be constantly employed to hold up the train, or that this is dragged along the pavement, gathering multitudinous germs on its way.

The usual thing is that the train is held up, with the result that only one hand is free to guide and wheel the perambulator, and over and over again we have seen how in forcing it up over a kerb the little occupant is shaken and jolted, and in some instances the perambu-

lator narrowly escapes being turned over altogether. When one considers the delicate nervous organization of an infant, and how little it takes to throw this out of gear, it is obvious that continual bumps and joltings must have a prejudicial effect upon the child's health. Moreover, in the constant crossing of streets the nurse is hampered by her train, and not only cannot guide the perambulator accurately, but also is impeded by the train so that she cannot get over the crossing as quickly as is desirable. Therefore, for reasons of safety to the child, as well as from an hygienic point of view, nursemaids should always wear dresses well clear of the ground.

PROFESSIONAL ENVY.

Professor Terriani, an Italian philosopher, has, we are told, amused himself by constructing a scale of degrees for the measurement of professional envy. The highest point in this envy-measurer is ten, architects are, happily, placed lowest in the scale, registering only one; advocates, priests, and military men are ranged at two, and in the ascending scale are professors of science and literature, four; journalists, five; authors, eight; doctors, nine; actors and actresses, ten.

The Professor considers the small amount of envy shown by architects and advocates to be due to the precise, severe, and rigid nature of their studies. Among the clergy envy is found mostly in preachers. In the military career, it is quiescent during peace, but can become very acute in war time. Envy, we are told, makes men of science and literature lead solitary lives, diffident of each other. Among physicians envy is still more prevalent, and they do not spare their colleagues, terming them quacks and charlatans. In the theatrical world envy reaches its worst and most acute form, vanity playing a great part in its production.

THE VALUE OF PUBLIC CONFERENCES.

The value of public conferences, and the practical outcome of suggestions made at them, has received ample proof of late years. The Fourth Annual Conference of the Matrons' Council is taking place as we go to press, and we hope to give a full account of it, as well as of the meeting in favour of State Registration of Trained Nurses next week. The Matrons' Council Conferences have so far been of great interest, and the present one promises to be quite up to the standard of former years.

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