

a patient be burned, and it would be better in a day or two. The doctor, however, subsequently attended her for three months, and she could not walk properly now, and had to have a high heel on one shoe.

In cross-examination the witness said the doctor knew she was going to have a nurse from the Association. He did not suggest she should have anyone more highly trained. When an Association nurse came to the house, she looked after the children, cooked the dinner, and acted as a domestic servant—in fact, did anything but the washing.

The Doctor's Evidence.

Mr. William T. Brand, B.S., said Mrs. Hayhurst told him she was getting an Association nurse; that was quite satisfactory to him. Her duties were simply to keep the patient warm and comfortable; she had nothing to do with the dressings or the instruments.

He first heard of the condition of the feet on the Tuesday following the operation, which was on a Wednesday. The dressing which had been used was rancid stuff. There was some shortening of one of the muscles as the result of the burn. He did not want the services of a highly-trained nurse. The duties the nurse performed were quite within the capability of any ordinary woman. Asked if he meant to say that these nurses were intended to attend at operations, the witness replied he "did not know what were the intentions of the Association." Nurse Quest said she had known surgical cases under all the surgeons in Hull, and had been nursing nine years.

The Society's Object.

Mr. Bickersteth said the Association was founded by Lady Margaret Bickersteth. Its object was to take the old village Gamp who alternated between the sick-room and the potato field and turn her into something very much better. Nurse Quest, who had formerly been an Association nurse for three years, was sent under the impression that the patient wanted nursing up preparatory to her journey to Hull.

Lady Margaret Bickersteth's Evidence.

Lady Margaret Bickersteth said she alone was responsible for the management of the Association. As far as she was aware, the persons to whom the nurses were sent had the same control over them during their stay that they had over ordinary domestic servants. Nurses had other duties after an operation besides attending to a patient's foot. A medical man told her it was very difficult to know the proper temperature for the bottles.

Nurse Quest's Evidence.

Nurse Quest said when the patient came round she complained of her foot. She did not report it to the doctor next morning, as she forgot to mention it, but she told him at night. When the doctor saw the wound afterwards he said it was poisoned. He looked at the oil and said the stuff was vile.

Before going down to pour out tea for the doctors on the day of the operation she told the other nurse to look after the bottles. She felt convinced the foot was burned while she was downstairs.

Medical Evidence.

Dr. Thomas Jefferson and Dr. Angus Fairweather said that in their opinion a fully-trained nurse should have been employed.

Judgment.

The Judge said the nurse left the patient, with the knowledge of the doctors, to give them some tea. During her absence the patient began to kick, and it seemed probable that the burns occurred at this time. The action must therefore fail, because it had not been proved that there was any negligence on the part of Nurse Quest. Probably the injuries seemed slight at first, but got worse from the use of improper remedies. It had not been proved that it was the negligence of anyone employed by the Association which caused the damage to the plaintiff.

It will be noted:—

1. That Lady Margaret Bickersteth assumed the whole responsibility for the management of the Association. Surely the time has gone past for professional work to be controlled and professional standards set by a member of the laity.

2. It is to us incomprehensible that a medical man should assert that a nurse left in charge of a patient after a case of abdominal section did not have to perform any duty "which required any special skill or training." His comprehension of the nursing duties involved is, in our opinion, entirely inadequate.

3. It will occur to most people that the second nurse might have "poured out the doctors' tea."

4. When women alternate between the potato-field and the work of nursing, surely it is time that a definite standard of nursing should be defined by law; no better plea could be brought forward in support of the Registration movement than the fact that these Benefit Nursing Associations, maintaining totally inadequate standards of general and special education, are organised by would-be philanthropists for the supposed benefit of the poor.

The question whether the hot-water bottles were duly protected by covers seems to have occurred to no one. It is the first question a trained nurse would have asked.

5. It will be noted that Nurse Quest, whose experience was that of "an Association nurse for three years," asserted that she had known surgical cases under all the surgeons in Hull.

NURSE CHARGED WITH ARSON.

Isabella Jane Livingstone, formerly a nurse employed at the Isolation Hospital at Booker, Bucks, was on Wednesday in last week charged at High Wycombe with feloniously setting fire to the hospital on Whit-Sunday. She appeared in the dock in nursing uniform.

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