

## Legal Matters.

### NURSE OR PALMIST?

At the Huddersfield Police Court recently, before his Honour Judge Cadman, Rose Whyke, spinster, of 24, South Parade, Huddersfield, sued Ellen Heathcote, of 56a, Church Street, Blackpool, a married woman, for £5 19s. 6d. Mrs. Heathcote (the defendant) was stated to be a certificated nurse, and Miss Whyke (the plaintiff) said that "she had assisted in nursing at a Nurse's Home in London, and had been engaged in nursing for Dr. Hamilton." The plaintiff's solicitor said the defendant was "a palmist, masseuse, and went in for hygienic complexion treatment and other like matters." The plaintiff was one of the ladies described in the defendant's prospectus as "ladies trained by Nurse Heathcote to perform a delicate operation called electrolysis." The ladies who performed this operation were said to be "most skilful and sympathetic." His client was one of these ladies. She was engaged at £1 per week, and had to keep herself and to pay for the room where she carried on the "skilful and sympathetic" operations by means of an electric battery. She did not receive her wages in full, nor was the room paid for. When she asked for a further remittance the defendant came over to Huddersfield from Blackpool and took away the battery.

In reference to the plaintiff's claim the defendant contended that the former had "said she was a trained medical nurse," but she had since learnt Miss Whyke had had no hospital experience. Her defence was that as the plaintiff had had no previous experience, she agreed to teach her for a month, during which time she was to give her services for nothing. She was then to receive £1 a week for working for one day a week only, and out of that to pay for the room.

After hearing the evidence, his Honour gave a verdict for the plaintiff, with costs.

The points of importance to the public are that a woman with no previous knowledge of the delicate operation of electrolysis was entrusted to perform it, after a month's "training," which it does not appear she ever received, for she was at work at Huddersfield while her principal was at Blackpool, and further that, according to her solicitor, she was described as a "most skilful and sympathetic" performer of this art.

It is not surprising that trained nurses are anxious for a Register in which the names of all thoroughly-educated members of their calling shall be entered under the authority of the State.

There is no means, at present, of knowing whether Mrs. Heathcote is a "certificated nurse and not a palmist," as her solicitor said, or not. If she combines both callings, a Nursing Board, if established, might properly be called on to decide whether it is an ethical procedure to practise as a nurse and a palmist simultaneously.

## Nursing Echoes.

*\*\* All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



With this issue we take the opportunity of wishing to one and all of our readers a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. As the Journal finds its way far afield, unless we take time by the forelock and express our good wishes at an early date, they will arrive too late by the time it reaches its destination. To our colleagues beyond the seas who are concerned in editing other journals—the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Australasian Nurses' Journal*, and *Una*, the organ of the Victorian Nurses' Association—we offer not only good wishes for the New Year, but congratulations on what they have achieved in the past; and in this country the various League Journals and the *Queen's Nurses' Magazine* have our heartiest good wishes, for we well know the arduous nature of the work involved and the large amount of labour freely expended.

We feel sure that all nurses who are able at this season will remember the privations of the poor in this great city. The slackness of trade has hit them hard, and two or three weeks out of work makes the difference between comparative comfort and destitution, when the week's wages leave no margin for a rainy day. There are, we know, considerable inroads into the purses of nurses working in hospitals at this season—plants and flowers for ward decoration, presents to other nurses, and for past and present patients are freely bought and gladly given. But there are nurses who have no such calls who might spare a trifle for one of the many funds which are pleading for assistance, and so help to make some child's Christmas the brighter.

The journals of the various Leagues not only serve as a welcome link between the members of the Leagues concerned, but contain much that is of interest to the nursing world at large. The recent issue of the *St. John's House News* is specially interesting, containing as it does excellent reports of the nursing section of the Berlin Congress of Women, and of the Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Nurses, held at the same time and place. The League did wisely in sending Miss Mary Burr as its delegate; she evidently missed nothing. Miss Laura Baker, the delegate of the League on the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, also presented an

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)