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**Editorial.**

**THE TRAINING OF PROBATIONERS IN INVALID COOKERY.**

A most valuable asset to a nurse is a knowledge of sick room cookery. It is becoming more and more acknowledged that the recovery of a patient is influenced greatly by the nourishment which he takes, and as the question of diet is frequently left much to the nurse during convalescence it behoves her to know not only how palatable dishes can be prepared, and temptingly presented, but also their nutritive value, for this, after all, is the essential point.

The education of probationers in the art of cookery during their training is therefore much to be desired, and it is satisfactory that at several of the London hospitals a course of instruction in the science and art of cooking is included in the three years course. Amongst these hospitals is Charing Cross, and last week, as will be seen in another column, certificates were presented by the chairman of the hospital, the Earl of Kilmorey, to those who had been successful in passing the prescribed examination. To all these nurses this certificate and the knowledge it implies should be of great use. In private nursing it frequently happens that a nurse must prepare small delicacies for the patient if she wishes them to be acceptable. Sometimes when isolated with an infectious case this is of great importance. And if it is unnecessary for her to prepare the food herself it is frequently a great help if she can give explicit directions as to what should be done.

Then a district nurse can give much very useful information in the homes of the poor

if she knows how nourishing dishes can be cheaply and temptingly prepared, she may even find time to give a course of lectures which are sure to be popular, and thus indirectly increase her own prestige and consequent powers of usefulness.

Again, many nurses in these days find themselves in lonely outposts of the Empire with very sick patients on their hands, and a very limited larder on which to draw. In this case much depends upon the nurse's ingenuity and skill, for the patient loathes the coarse and unappetising food which has been his portion for long, but if the nurse is able to present it to him in a different and more tempting guise he may be induced to take it, and this may make all the difference between life and death. Surely, therefore, an intimate knowledge of the chemistry of food as well as of skill in its preparation is a thing which all nurses should be at pains to acquire—if not in the course of their training, then at any other opportunity which presents itself.

We believe that committees would be specially amenable to suggestions that instruction in sick room cookery should be included in that given to their probationers for, though they may not all understand the importance of special branches of nursing there are few who do not know the importance of, and the pleasure which is derived from, a well cooked and well served meal. There should, therefore, not be a great deal of difficulty in convincing them of the desirability of cookery classes for probationers. We hope that in the near future every hospital of importance will include this important branch of study in its three years' nursing curriculum. Few persons will be prepared to dispute the value of the knowledge thus gained to every nurse.

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