

their services should these be required. It is to be earnestly hoped that no such necessity may arise, and as yet the enemy seems still to be far from our doors. But with so many trading ports on the coast, a strict and careful watch is plainly necessary."

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THE subject of Village Nurses is at present exciting a good deal of attention, and the following letter, which recently appeared in *The Cable*, puts the case for these workers very well:—

SIR,—I was glad to gather from Lord Winchilsea's leading article in *The Cable* a week ago, that a nursing association was being formed in Lincolnshire. I trust it is on the Holt-Ockley lines, for experience is showing every day that for a rural district it is far and away the best. In towns, among a densely-crowded population, the Jubilee or District Nurse system is the one best adapted to the circumstances. The Nurse can go from case to case, ministering to a patient for half-an-hour or so, and then going on to another; but this cannot be done in the country where the houses are miles apart. A Nurse must go into a cottage and there stay, attending to the one case, or at most to two or three immediately contiguous. The two systems are completely different, each excellent in its own sphere, but they do not mix satisfactorily; and for the country the Holt-Ockley scheme has three enormous advantages over the other. Greater economy; for the Nurses, not having had such a long and expensive training, are not so highly paid. Greater usefulness, for though they are Nurses first, they are not Nurses only, but take up all the duties of the mistress of the house when she is laid by (a most important part of their work), and also they nurse every description of case, infectious as well as non-infectious—of course a strict rule being that they may not go from an infectious disorder to a confinement; if there is not time enough to thoroughly disinfect them, other nurses must take up the engagements. Greater power of concentration; for if an epidemic or any sudden crisis arises requiring several Nurses, not only can all those belonging to the Nursing Association be concentrated in one spot, by the interchangeable system they can be drawn from the neighbouring N.A.'s., the usual arrangement in such a case being that the borrowing N.A. pays travelling expenses and sends the fees the Nurses earn to the lending one, which is nothing like such a strain on the funds as employing two or three extra Nurses at a guinea a week. The Holt-Ockley scheme requires less capital to start it, less income to keep it going, and the usefulness of

the Nurses makes it a wonderful boon to the labouring classes in villages. At the first starting of an Association, there is sometimes, I may say frequently, a little prejudice against it in the minds of the doctors. Some think the training not sufficiently long, others that the Nurses will interfere with their work and emoluments, but a few months' experience generally wears both prejudices away. As for the feeling of the villagers themselves, there are two phrases which I have now heard in several different places, which sum it up very tersely. The woman says, "I have been nursed just like as if I was a lady." The man says, "I never was so comfortable when the missus had a baby afore."—

Yours faithfully,
MARY WHITMORE JONES.
Sec. Heythrop N.A. (North Oxon.)

* * *

THE terrible tragedy which occurred on the 16th inst. at the London Hospital, has been kept out of the press in the most remarkable manner, and once more people are asking whether things are really so bad at this Institution that to use the customary phrase "the details are unfit for publication." If not, it is generally felt that the press are acting very unwisely in assisting to hush up a very grave scandal.

* * *

THE inquest, of which a report appears in another column, shows that a baby of two years old was placed in a bath which was big enough, and held water sufficient to cover its whole body when lying down, and that the child was left alone there for half-an-hour. Nothing could more conclusively prove the truth of the charges which have been from time to time brought against the management of the Hospital.

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In fact, no one can consider after this, that Nursing in the ordinary sense is understood at the London Hospital. A child is ordered a hip bath, which should, therefore, if it was to do any good, have been maintained at a fairly even temperature for the half-hour of its administration. Yet this infant is left alone for twenty-five minutes in a large room with the door wide open. It is inevitable that the water of so large an exposed surface must have rapidly become cooled, and at the end of the half-hour must have been many degrees below the body heat.

* * *

IN the opinion of all trained Nurses this method of giving a hip bath will be held to prove an absence of the most elementary Nursing knowledge on the part of the Nurse and Sister implicated in

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)