

reason. She must undertake to carry out, to the best of her ability and powers, the duties assigned to her, and to conform to all reasonable rules and regulations; the Institution agrees, in return, to provide her with board and lodging during the term of her pupilage. For the benefits which she receives, we are, moreover, now of opinion that she should be called upon to pay some premium, or, at least, receive no salary; but this is a detail into which we need not enter at length, on this occasion. If she is found unsuitable, or if she finds the life uncongenial, there should be a mutual power of cancelling the contract by a definite notice on either side. If she completes her term of service to the satisfaction of the authorities, and can, moreover, prove that she has attained to a sufficient standard of knowledge and efficiency, the Hospital should undertake to grant her a Certificate to that effect, while she should be, at once, made to understand that the Hospital would retain the right to recall and cancel that Certificate in the event of her proving herself at any subsequent period to be unworthy of trust as a Nurse.

An agreement based on such principles as these would prevent many, if not all, of the disputes which now arise as to the rights of Probationers, or as to the extent of the authority over them. It would, for example, prevent the possibility of the Probationer being sent out as a thoroughly trained Nurse to private cases. The Nurse in the particular case at Manchester was considered thoroughly efficient and satisfactory, or it may be taken for granted that she would not have been sent out to so onerous and responsible a post. Yet, if she were so efficient, it was, on the face of it, not fair to her that she should not have been permitted to compete for her Certificate; and the authorities of the Royal Infirmary have been placed in a very awkward dilemma. If this Nurse does not succeed at the examination—which, as the result of her lawsuit, she is to be admitted to—in obtaining her Certificate, there is certain to be a public outcry that the authorities send out as private Nurses women who they themselves afterwards prove to be inefficient. If she passes her examination, the Hospital Committee will be compelled to grant a Certificate of trustworthiness to a Nurse whom they have discharged from their service on the ground of unsatisfactory conduct.

As we have said, we express no opinion on the merits of the case; but the importance of the broad principles of justice to Nurses, of public advantage and of Hospital policy which underlie it, cannot be exaggerated. A woman who enters a Hospital to learn the duties of a Nurse should, under no circumstances whatever, be sent out during her pupilage to act as a private Nurse. It is unfair to her by interrupting her training; it is most unfair to the public, because it is supplying them with an inferior

article to that for which they seek—a thoroughly trained Nurse. The Probationer's contract of the future, we believe, will distinctly stipulate that the pupil is to be taught her work in the wards of the Hospital for the full period of her training, and is not to be employed outside during that term for the purpose of making money for the Institution. Earnestly wishful for the welfare of Hospitals, as we naturally are, we trust that this matter will soon receive general consideration, and settlement on a broad and just basis.

#### TRADE AND THE FLAG.

IT is a common saying, in commercial circles, that "trade follows the flag," and it is one which even well-informed newspapers repeat as a kind of accepted truth. It may be so in other lands; we are inclined to think it is so. But a very brief reflection would show that the converse proposition is more accurate, so far as this country is concerned, and that the British flag has almost invariably followed its traders. It did not enter America, or Canada, or the West Indies, until many years after British capital and enterprise had effected a secure lodgment, and the Indian Empire was literally built up on commerce. In all probability History is repeating itself, and an African Empire is now being erected under our eyes by precisely the same methods, and the same class. In another twenty years, England will awaken to the fact that her commercial travellers, working from the south, have touched hands with their coadjutors from the north, that the railway runs from Alexandria to Cape Town, and that all the land between is dominated by her restless sons; an African Empire will be quietly added to her responsibilities, and the flag will once more follow trade. These remarks are aroused by a delightful story which has just reached us, and which points our moral while it adorns a tale. It appears, according to reliable testimony, that the Messenger of Lobengula, the King of Matabeleland, with whom our colonists have lately had so much trouble, wears, on State occasions, as his headgear and chief insignia of distinction, the end of a box, whereon is painted in imposing scarlet letters, the magic words "FRY'S COCOA." After this, need we any further argument to prove our contention, and disprove the proverb.

#### THE NURSING DIRECTORY.

We are requested by the Editors of this most useful publication to call the attention of Nurses to the fact, that the slips, which are sent out annually, at this period of the year, to all whose names are in the Directory, have been duly issued. The Editors would feel grateful by these slips being returned as soon as possible, and they hope that in every case the Nurse will add such particulars of her Nursing career as she would like to appear therein. Inasmuch as every year this work of reference is being more consulted by medical men and the general public for the interesting information which it contains, not only of Nurses, but also of Nurse Training Schools, it is a matter of much importance to Nurses that its facts concerning themselves should be absolutely accurate and up-to-date.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)