

meagre wage, and lose all that makes life worth living—health. We went down into this densely-populated city, and looked into its horribly overcrowded tenements where whole families live in one room, and where sickness and misery find congenial environment. We do not remember to have seen anything more piteous than the faces of the children.

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LADY BLYTHSWOOD is doing well in calling public attention to the needs of the sick and needy in the overcrowded districts of Cowcaddens and Bridgeton. She will do well to place very plainly before the numerous and wealthy mercantile classes of Glasgow their duty towards the sick poor of their city, and to ask that from henceforth they shall of their plenty give so liberally, that the funds for nursing the sick poor in their own homes, shall never again be supplied by the labour of hard-working Nurses. It is a disgrace to Glasgow that it should do its District Nursing Charity at the expense of its Nurses. Should the private Nurses agree to receive in salary less than the public are willing to pay for their services, let the Committee, when the cost of organization is defrayed, invest the surplus funds in a superannuation fund for the Nurses when worn out and unfit for work. The knowledge that this just arrangement had been made would save many a working-woman an anxious and aching heart, when considering the future.

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DR. W. HARDING writes to the *Globe* that a three years' curriculum of Nurses' education is carried on at the County Asylum at Northampton. Lectures are given, and the Nurses' knowledge is tested by examination at the end of each year. This is very satisfactory, as the nursing of the insane is a very special branch of work, and one which, until lately, has not been satisfactorily organized.

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FROM the *Trained Nurse*, for November, we cull the following piece of good news. Members of the R.B.N.A. please note:—

"The Superintendents of Training Schools, attached to General Hospitals in the United States and Canada, are requested to send their names and addresses, with the name of the Hospital with which their School is connected, to Miss A. L. Alston, Superintendent, Mount Sinai Training School for Nurses, 149, East 67th Street, New York City. At the Congress of Nurses, held in Chicago in June, an Association of Superintendents was organized by those present; the object being to advance and perfect the practice of nursing, and to elevate the profession. At an early date, notice will be sent out to call a meeting, which will be held in New York City within a few months, and at which, it is hoped, there will be a large attendance."

Matrons in Council.

WHAT IS A TRAINED NURSE?

IS A PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION ADVISABLE; IF SO, IN WHAT SUBJECTS?



MADAM,—I should be much obliged if you could spare space in your valuable paper for my views on the subject under discussion, i.e.: the necessity for a Probationer's entrance examination.

We require a candidate for Probationership to be of average height and good physique, and to produce a medical certificate as to health, but, as a rule, there is absolutely no guarantee or test demanded as to her intelligence and education, saving that the form of application "must be in the candidate's own handwriting." Surely the fact that Probationers have to spend, at all events, a portion of their time, in acquiring a theoretical knowledge of the practical details of their profession, should be taken into consideration in the selection of the raw material. To women of average intellect, and, above all, of average education, the ordinary Hospital Nursing lectures and examinations should, and do, present no difficulties, but it is pitiful to see those whose knowledge has not advanced far beyond an elementary acquaintance with the three Rs, striving to understand and digest facts with which they are unfamiliar, couched in language to which they are unaccustomed, and which they are quite unable to commit to paper. It stands to reason that a Probationer should not be hampered in her training by a want of those ordinary rudiments of knowledge which should have been learnt before her practical training as a Nurse commenced. Many Probationers, I am sure, would be spared the bitter disappointment they often have to suffer when, after years of hard work, they fail in their examinations, if the authorities of the training schools insisted upon testing the mental, as well as physical, fitness of their candidates, before allowing them to join the Hospital, by an entrance examination which should be sufficiently thorough to prove whether the intending Probationer would be able to attend the lectures, classes, etc., during her training, with some reasonable hope of profiting by them. It might, of course, be arranged for the training schools to accept (as they do in the case of medical students) the results of certain public examinations—such as those of the College of Preceptors or the Oxford and Cambridge locals—in lieu of an entrance examination; and I do not see why some central body, such as the Royal British Nurses' Association, should not hold examinations which might be considered qualifying. Considering how universal a practice it is to test the theoretical as well as practical qualifications of a Probationer by examination before granting her certificate, it seems passing strange that no effort should, as a rule, be made before she commences her training to test her fitness for being taught.

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