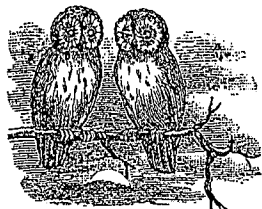


Matrons in Council.

WHAT IS A TRAINED NURSE?

What should constitute an efficient preliminary education, and how should it be obtained?



MADAM,—The attempt on the part of any person to limit exactly the amount of education and knowledge which each woman, desirous of being a Nurse, should possess, appears to me to be entirely superfluous. We have, and always shall have, the educated ignoramus in our midst, just as we shall always meet the uneducated person possessed of *sound knowledge*. I agree and disagree at the same time with all your correspondents—which may sound inconsistent, and yet is not so. What we have got to define is, What *is* education? and upon that question, so far, no definite opinion has been set forth. It is suggested, on the one hand, that the theoretical standard must be high, because the best educated woman will prove the best Nurse; it is argued, on the other hand, that theoretical education must be rudimentary, because, otherwise, Natures' favoured ones would be excluded. Miss Isla Stewart strikes a happy vein, Miss Landale touches a vital point, and had the whole batch of letters been run into one, under one signature, we should have arrived at a fair solution of the question, What should *not* constitute an efficient preliminary education for a Nurse. First "catch your hare." In other words, the raw material must be most carefully selected. The woman who is to be trained into a "good Nurse," must be physically as perfect as she can be, of *sound* constitution, and *cultured* mind. She will thus appreciate cleanliness and courtesy—the two paramount qualities of which a Nurse should be possessed—and having these two virtues intact, I will guarantee to train any woman into a good Nurse. The preliminary education of such a woman should be a sound general education—from 7 to 17, six years' *home* happiness from 17 to 23, the happiness which springs from the love of home and hallowing family ties—the happiness of being loved, cared for, praised, spoilt, if need be, by a gentle mother, an indulgent father, admiring sisters, brave brothers—such happiness which sinks deep down into the soul of a woman, and develops all that is best in her nature, and warms her heart with sweet memories for all time. Let us have our Nurse straight from the warm family nest—this *home influence* is a detail which is far too seldom taken into consideration in the choice of Probationers. During these years, under the guidance of a true mother, the daughter will have learnt all the homely arts and duties; she will be skilful with

the needle, a good plain cook, appreciative of fresh air and daintily cleanliness in bed and living-room; she will know the times and seasons, and the value of foods; she will visit the sick, and help the poor; she will take pride in her fairness, because she is a woman and her mother's pride; and she will read widely and argue with her father, because she is his companion and his joy. Give us the sweet, fresh, buoyant homely girl, the child of God-fearing parents, the girl whose duty is the mainspring of her living, and the theoretical system of her education is easily arranged. I have read with great interest of the preliminary theoretical course of education for Nurses about to be begun under the auspices of the Royal British Nurses' Association; and what could be better after twenty than for such a girl as I have described to spend twelve months in studying Elementary Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene; and later, to pass through the practical curriculum, which will doubtless be so efficiently taught by members of the Association, before entering one of our leading Nursing Schools for a three years' term of training? Let us remember, however, that it is the finest clay that can be most easily moulded by the hand of the potter, and which will best stand the fiery furnace.

"HOME SISTER."

National Health Society.

President :—HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, K.G.



ON Wednesday, March 14th, at 4 p.m. in the Committee Room of 53, Berners Street, Sir Douglas Galton gave a highly interesting and instructive Lecture on "House Sanitation."

On the 13th March, there was an Examination on Nursing for the Pupils of the Board School, Addison Road, when Certificates of the National Health Society were awarded to successful candidates.

On the 12th inst., under the auspices of the East London Women's Christian Temperance Union, the first of four Lectures, by a Lecturer of the National Health Society, was given in the School-hall of Wycliffe Chapel, Philpot Street, Mile End Road, at 6.45. The subjects chosen for the four Lectures, are :—The Sick Room—Food for the Invalid—How to Make Good Poultices—Infectious Diseases.

On Tuesday, March 13th, Mr. Owen Lankester, M.R.C.S., delivered his fourth Lecture at the Duchess of Bedford's, 15, Belgrave Square, on "Rules of Health."

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