

wrong, and the most strange part of it is the medical officer admits that although he was treating her for erysipelas, he did not examine her head (the part affected) when he discharged her. The Matron also, who spent a considerable portion of her time in the Infirmary making good the defects of the Nurse who had just left, and preparing for the new Nurse coming in, although she examined the heads of all the patients who were in bed, did not look at this particular girl, who was up and dressed; so you see, Sir, that I am not able to deny the truth of your statement, viz., that the head was in a bad state and that patches were eaten away.

May I ask if you have seen for yourself what is the matter, and if the patches eaten away are the effect of vermin or of erysipelas? I shall be very sorry indeed if a case as you describe has been allowed to leave here unnoticed.

With regard to the wages, the Relieving Officer who sent Purcell into the Workhouse has been here this morning and to my surprise tells me that Purcell's master paid him 17s. towards her maintenance.

I beg to thank you for your letter, and am, Sir, yours obediently,

J. HAYES, *Master.*

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To that letter he replied by return of post stating that he had seen the girl's head and found that patches the size of a threepenny piece were eaten away by vermin, and he had asked that at least the girl's wages should be returned, as the girl's father was badly in want, and was not in a condition to go to work. He placed the matter now before the Board, as he considered this to be a case of great neglect on the part of another Union, and he thought they ought to be made to return the girl her money.

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The Clerk said he thought the letter was a very straightforward one, and it showed the Brentford authorities had a good official in the person of their Union Master, for he did not shrink from admitting when he was in the wrong. He thought the best way would be to send a copy of the letter to the Clerk to the Brentford Board of Guardians, and ask him to report the matter to his Board.

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The Rev. W. MILLS said the girl's father was out of employment, and the girl herself would not be able to earn anything for some weeks in consequence of being sent back in this state. Had the father been in work, the Board would not have been troubled with the matter.

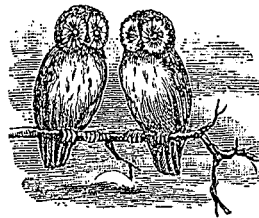
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WE heartily agree with the Clerk that the letter of the Master is manly and creditable; but the whole revolting report only adds one more item of evidence to the already well-known fact, that the Nursing in the sick wards in our Workhouses is in urgent need of reformation.

Matrons in Council.

WHAT IS A TRAINED NURSE?

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



MADAM,—My views on this subject being somewhat retrograde, I have hesitated to advance them lest, like Balaam, after being expected "to bless," I shall be found "to have cursed them altogether." I may state at the

outset, that after a prolonged and careful consideration of the whole matter, I am absolutely convinced of the utter impossibility of setting up any educational standard of a woman's capability for the duties of a Nurse. It is true that by so doing you may attract a scientific, or shall I say *sciolistic*, band of aspirants, for their knowledge at best can be merely superficial; but what we want is not embryo Senior Wranglers or Double Firsts, but strong, healthy, capable, and intelligent recruits possessing, as a first qualification, the *mens sana in corpore sano*.

Let us take the requirements *seriatim*:—

A. General Education.—This would ordinarily be acquired at school; but only the better classes have opportunities afforded them of instruction in all the subjects comprised in it. Surely it cannot be proposed to limit the entrance into a distinctly democratic profession like Nursing to members of one class only? It would be manifestly unfair to women of poor though respectable parentage to exclude them from a profession which might happen to be their vocation, simply because they were unable to write a prose essay or construe accurately one of the odes of Horace.

B. Domestic.—In all the requirements under this heading, I thoroughly concur. They are eminently practical, and a knowledge of such matters is absolutely essential to the efficiency of a Nurse and the consequent well-being of her patient. But the manner in which these duties are performed in the ordinary household is very different to the way they are taught in a hospital ward. For my own satisfaction, before entering on my hospital career, I went through a course of this sort at home, but am bound to confess, I found it utterly useless in practice. Still, such knowledge might be organized and made useful under direction.

C. Scientific.—This, I maintain, can be quicker and more correctly learned after practical experience in the wards. If it be insisted on as compulsory before entrance into a Hospital, it will be acquired as a dead language, and can never be properly applied. The impressions conveyed by mere book knowledge strike people differently according to the receptivity of their minds. Ventilation and cleanliness, a Probationer is taught almost unconsciously from the day of her entrance into a properly managed sick ward; but

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