

The infants boarded out are subject to the law Roussel ; it has, however, more of good intention than of efficacy. The nurslings are periodically inspected by the local physician, but his time is largely occupied with his private practice. And there are so many ways of feeding and preparing a baby for death, by those having a mercantile interest in the disease. Happily, the terrible evil cannot speculate in any form of life assurance ; if so, France would soon be finished. It was proposed to make the national schoolmistress in the rural districts, wherever a commercial boarding "home" existed, the inspectress of these establishments ; and the idea would be admirable. It would be advisable, when the death-rate in any of the latter became abnormal, to suspend their licence. Humanity would pardon that degree of suspicion. A law is now being prepared, empowering medical inspectors to visit private families, and report on the observance of the conditions for the rearing of infants till three years old, especially in the case where the latter are in the custody of grand-parents, aunts, and sisters ; prohibiting women who live in furnished lodgings to take in nurslings, as well as mothers who have three children of their own to rear.

But the great remedy lies in the special education of the young girl of to-day who is destined to be a mother of the future. Girls are now compelled to study programmes during the best years of their lives, which are but "loads of learned lumber for the head" ; but in a knowledge of the practical and domestic duties of life, they are as innocent as they are helpless. There are in Paris alone 7,000 young women who have passed the most brilliant examinations before they were nineteen, to obtain the diploma of national schoolmistress, for which there are but 6 per cent. of vacancies annually. They can obtain no employment ; they are too intellectual for manual work, and honest artisans fear them as wives. Their life crumbles away in presence of sharp misery, and that deferred hope which makes the heart sick. Society does not want so much nursery governesses, as practical children's Nurses, such as are prepared in the special Nursery schools of Sweden, Norway, Belgium, and Bavaria, and latest, though not last, England. France intends founding, as annexes to the Ladies' Lyceums, schools for the caring and management of infants, where they must graduate, "walk the nurseries," ere they will be granted their degree—for perfection in universal knowledge. *Qui non proficit, deficit.*

Science Notes.

SCIENCE IN THE CAMBRIDGE LOCALS.

It will probably be a matter of some interest to all Nurses, and especially to those who in their school days were intimately acquainted with the regulations for the Cambridge Local Examinations, to know that the subject of Physiology and Hygiene has been introduced into the Natural Science group for both junior and senior students. Most of our readers have no doubt heard of the teacher of an elementary school who received, from the mother of one of her pupils, a letter, worded thus :—"Dear Miss, please don't teach my Mary Jane any more about her insides. It won't never do her no good and, besides, its rude." Although they do not all express themselves in a manner

quite so forcible as the above, there are still, we believe, many parents of pupils in both elementary and secondary schools who do not approve of the teaching of physiology to their daughters. If they do not go so far as to say that physiology is "rude," they express a sentiment somewhat similar in the opinion that "Botany is a more suitable subject for girls to study."

Whether the introduction of Physiology and Hygiene, as a subject of examination in the Cambridge Locals, will have any influence in popularising these studies remains to be seen. From every point of view, except that which regards an acquaintance with one's own structure as "rude," the new subject is an improvement on the old one of "Zoology." The latter did, indeed, include a certain amount of physiology, but the ground to be covered was altogether too wide, in the opinion of most teachers at all events. Thus the syllabus for juniors (boys and girls under sixteen) requires a knowledge of "the characteristics of animals and of the sub-kingdoms of the animal kingdom ; the structure of the principal parts and organs of animals, including a general account of the osteology of man ; the rudiments of animal physiology, as treated in Huxley's Lessons in Elementary Physiology."

Most persons would consider the rudiments of physiology quite enough without any classification of the entire animal kingdom. If it be the view of the examiners that the learning by heart of certain brief tables of classification will occupy very little time, it may be remarked that it will also be of very little profit. What does the pupil gain by knowing that a certain class of animals breathes by means of lungs and another class breathes by means of gills, while a third has both organs at different times during its life, if he or she has only the vaguest notions of what either lungs or gills are ? Classification appears to come in appropriately only after a somewhat prolonged study of structure ; unless the pupil is prepared to classify for himself to a certain extent, he gains very little by learning the classification made by others.

It is often objected by those who disapprove of physiology in schools that the pupils cannot be taught enough for their learning to be of any practical value, and that, in their case particularly, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." We cannot, of course, agree with them in this ; so far as we know, no one ever pretended that the physiology learnt at school would enable the learner to dispense with the aid of a doctor in cases of serious illness. What we do believe is that a knowledge of physiology will more effectually prevent a girl from injuring her health by unsuitable clothing and unsuitable food, etc., than will mere precepts.

To most persons, a knowledge of the elements of physiology merely gives an idea, not an understanding, of wonders of which they would "never have dreamed," as a beginner in physiology once remarked. With regard to other persons, of whom we have all met examples at one time or another, no amount of ignorance and no amount of knowledge, to which they are ever likely to attain, will prevent their knowing better than most people on most subjects.

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