

perienced. The majority of those who obtain the certificate of a good Training School prefer at once either to enter upon private Nursing work or to seek for some higher position than that of staff Nurse in some General or Special Hospital; and until lately the managers of Fever Hospitals have done but little either in the way of enhanced remuneration or special privileges to induce the best class of trained Nurses to enter their service. But if, under the present conditions, a probationer entered a Fever Hospital, and worked therein, say for one, or for two, years, she would at the termination of that time be no further advanced towards the natural object of her ambition—a certificate of efficiency as a Trained Nurse. It is assumed by some that she would seek for admission to a General Training School, after her service in the Fever Hospital was completed; but on the other hand, it is clearly expected, by others, that the training in Fever Nursing would be sufficient to qualify anyone to perform the ordinary duties of a Nurse. If the latter ground be taken, there is the gravest objection to the scheme on the score of its disadvantages to the public, because it is evident that a woman who has only had experience of fever patients can know nothing concerning the nursing say of surgical cases, or obstetric cases, or even of patients suffering from ordinary medical complaints. In short, if a Fever Hospital seriously proposed to certify its probationers at the termination of one or two years' service as thoroughly trained Nurses, they would be exposing the sick to serious dangers, and themselves to well-deserved reprobation by launching, upon the public, women of most limited experience and professional knowledge, as though they were thoroughly trained and experienced Nurses. If, however, it be suggested that women should become probationers in Fever Hospitals before commencing their general training, we would express our conviction that the suggestion resembles the placing of a cart before a horse, inasmuch as it supposes that women who have no knowledge of general nursing would be able efficiently to carry out the duty of attendance upon people so seriously ill as fever patients often are. There is in addition, both a physical, and what might also be called a moral, objection to this suggestion. General Hospitals do not nowadays admit probationers before they are 23, on the avowed ground that it is not well that younger women should be engaged in nursing male patients. And it is also a fact that, at an earlier age, women are more likely to be attacked by infectious disease, so that the admission of probationers of, say, 21 years old to Fever Hospitals, would almost inevitably lead to a larger percentage of cases of illness amongst the Nursing Staff.

From whatever aspect this question is viewed, the suggestion that probationers should commence their training in Fever Hospitals, is seen to be attended by the gravest objections. And we are therefore impelled to the conclusion that for the benefit of everyone concerned it is advisable that the Nurses employed in Fever Hospitals should be drawn either from the ranks of those who have been already trained, or, at least, of those who are being trained, in General Hospitals. Some time ago we referred to this matter, and have since seen no reason to alter the views which we then expressed.

It appears to us that it would be possible for a species of affiliation between the Nursing Staffs of Special Hospitals and those of our large Nurse Training Schools to be arranged. Events appear to be moving in this direction, and if this consummation could be arrived at, it would undoubtedly be of the greatest material benefit to the patients, to the authorities of special Hospitals such as those under the control of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and also to those of our General Hospitals; while the benefit to Nurses in the extended experience and education which they would thus receive are so manifest that they require no further explanation.

#### A NURSE'S ACTION.

AN important action which was tried in the Law Courts last week, for slander, raises points of much importance to Nurses generally. The plaintiff, a Nurse, attended upon a lady in her confinement, and apparently, when she left, her patient was quite contented with the services she had rendered. Shortly afterwards, however, the patient declined to hold any further communication with the Nurse and stated that she considered it her duty to complain to others concerning the great neglect which the Nurse had shown. It is difficult to read between the lines of the evidence given in court, and to ascertain why it was thought the Nurse was at fault. However, on the advice of her counsel, the defendant withdrew all charges against the Nurse, and also submitted to the payment of damages to the extent of £30. Without a greater knowledge of the circumstances of the case we are not in a position to say more than that the plaintiff certainly justified her position by the result of her case. But, on broad professional grounds, it appears to us that it would be very detrimental to Nurses generally, if the public were led to believe that they would carry into courts of law any apparent reflection upon their Nursing abilities; and there can be no doubt that in the present state of uncertainty as to the necessary standard of a Nurse's education, a clever Counsel could easily break down many a Nurse's claim to be considered trained. While we cannot but feel pleased that the Nurse in this instance justified herself, it is our duty to point out that legal proceedings may possibly cut both ways, and that the public might not improbably be afraid to employ Nurses if they show a disposition to take legal proceedings against their patients.

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