

On this point the public conscience is becoming thoroughly aroused, and they must see to it that our *deserving* poor outside the Poor Law Infirmaries shall likewise be provided with efficient nursing. It is not improbable that a beneficent Government may in the future organise the remuneration of parish and district Nurses upon such a scale as will procure this most desirable end.

Passing to the relation of the Nurse to the medical man, there can be but one accepted position between these workers, whose mutual performance of duty secures to the public such immense advantages. The medical man is the superior officer of the Nurse—his duty to direct, hers to carry directions into effect; and we are of opinion that very strict discipline between the official relations of these workers is the only means whereby satisfactory relations can be maintained. On duty the Nurse must recognise the medical man as her superior officer, address him as “sir,” and understand that she can only maintain the dignity of her position by loyalty to her superior. Nothing is more fatal than any other relationship between doctor and Nurse—discipline is at once relaxed, and with it order.

And again, this sense of discipline, the root of all professional efficiency, can only be acquired in a well ordered Nursing school, and after years of *training*. We venture to differ with Sir Dyce Duckworth in his deductions that the public and medical men complain of the *thoroughly-trained* Nurse; it is the *gaucherie* and ignorance of the *semi-educated, so-called trained, Nurse*, who neither knows her place, nor is inspired by any professional *esprit de corps*, that is causing the undeniable friction in her relations with medical men and the public. It is to be hoped in the near future, when the uniform curriculum of training and certification of Nurses is in force, that we shall remove these justly-merited reproaches from our midst.

We cannot resist a word on the subject of matrimony, which Sir Dyce designates the “highest outcome of life.” Here we are quite in sympathy with the able lecturer; *true* matrimony—by which we mean the perfect union of a man and woman on terms of absolute equality, the happiness of the one being the first instinct of the other—is no doubt an ideal state; but we must not forget that to few is such happiness accorded, and neither is *personal* happiness the highest aim of human life. We women of the nineteenth century have awakened and answered to the roll call of public duty, and we must bear in mind that the sloth engendered by perfect

domestic happiness is a danger to our higher development so long as lonely women and children are starving in body and soul.

We hope next week to deal somewhat at length with the friction which exists, and its cause, at the Lewisham Infirmary, and feel sure that the ratepayers will agree with us that the prolonged and undignified wrangle concerning matters of internal discipline shows a lamentable lack of administrative ability upon the part of the Guardians. In suspending the Matron, without due consideration, they committed not only an act of injustice, but a blunder, and the sooner they bow gracefully to the decision of the Local Government Board, and reinstate this much-injured official, the better.

The “prescribing chemist” has been very much to the fore during the prevalence of influenza. It is a “field day” for them when the fear of an epidemic drives the public to their counter with anxious enquiries as to what “they shall take to ward off the influenza.”

But there is not so much danger when the chemist orders on his own account a “tonic of iron” or a pick-me-up of ammoniated quinine. His action then may be comparatively harmless. But unfortunately there are some chemists who seek to impress their customers by suggesting an “improvement” on a physician’s prescription. A case came under our notice a few days ago of a lady recovering from the prostrating effect of influenza, whose doctor had prescribed a mixture to overcome some gastric disturbance, in which seven minims of nux vomica were contained in each dose.

On taking the prescription to the chemist he oracularly ran his eye over the ingredients. “That’s rather a queer mixture,” he said, with such a prophetic and solemn air that the patient was quite alarmed. “Why,” he said, “he has only given you five drops of nux vomica, when there ought to be ten in every dose.” The patient supposing that stress of work had induced her physician, in a fit of absent-mindedness, to reduce the conventional quantity of nux, gave the chemist authority to bring the quantity up to what he assured her was the conventional standard. So he mixed the ten minims to the dose, and she went home rejoicing that her chemist was a man of so much ability and forethought.

After the first two doses, taken somewhat closer together than they should have been, she described herself as feeling “nervous,” and she noticed that there was a little muscular twitching and a curious feeling of rigidity about the

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