

We are always very glad indeed to receive such queries from our correspondents. We have asked for an explanation of the term from the Sister who took the notes of the case in question, and she writes:

"I am not surprised that the Nurses found some difficulty in understanding what was meant by 'Laughing exercises,' which I think was the term I used, not 'cure.' It is an essentially American treatment and I have seen it nowhere else. The theory of the 'Laughing exercise' which is largely used in some forms of gastric trouble such as chronic dyspepsia is, that by this form of exercise, certain groups of pectoral and abdominal muscles are brought into play, which otherwise would not be used. By this treatment muscular development is encouraged, and congestion relieved by causing a free circulation of blood, not only through the muscles but through the stomach, liver, and intestinal tract. The patient is instructed to give full play to his risible faculties and to this end amusing stories are read to him and he does his best to encourage "happy laughter." In this form of exercise it is far better to treat two or three patients at the same time, as we are all aware how very infectious laughing is, and the fact of seeing someone else amused is generally quite enough to send all the patients into fits of laughter. I would like to add that the treatment would never be ordered in acute cases of any kind such as gastritis, &c., when it might be very harmful. But it is of undoubted use in chronic dyspepsia, liver congestion, or obstinate constipation."

A WRITER in the June number of *Atalanta*, in an article on "Nursing for Ladies," says she does not wish to under-rate "a clever hand, a light step, and an eye that is open to all the wants of the patient," but she says "they are by no means the chief characteristic of a good Nurse." She then goes on to say "that a would-be Nurse need not have any chief characteristics except those of a woman who does her duty conscientiously and with energy, and sticks to it through thick and thin." Now we are inclined to think that Nursing is a distinct faculty—it is an art, a talent all by itself. An average Nurse can be turned out by education and training, but the real Nurse-type must have a "natural faculty" which is of course enormously added to and improved by her Hospital experience. We should also say that "a clever hand, a light step, and an eye that is open to all the wants of the patient" do comprise just the chief characteristics which go to make up the ideal Nurse.

THE Managers of the Flower Distribution Branch of the Kyrle Society are sending out reminders to the public of the appreciation with which gifts of flowers are received for distribution among the poor, to whom these luxuries come very few and far between. We would ask those of our readers who have gardens, and blossoms, and fruit, not to forget the Hospitals.

But we would like to suggest that it is no use sending full-blown flowers, and that the greatest care should be taken in packing.

Only those Nurses who are real lovers of flowers and have the pride of their wards at heart, can appreciate the disappointment of unpacking what appears externally to be a gorgeous gift of flowers, but which turns out when the lid is opened, to be only a hamper of loose petals, stems, and stalks. And this arises partly from the fact of fully-blown roses, instead of buds, having been chosen, and all heaped together rather indiscriminately.

Just now when the country is looking so lovely, in spite of the long drought, and blossoms are coming forth in great profusion, and the strawberries are so temptingly ripe, what a delightful thing it is to have a lovely garden and a heart which remembers the dust and heat of London, and the Hospitals and their workers. What a small thing it is to leisure country folk to despatch a hamper of "garden stuff"—including plenty of strawberries, peas, and other vegetables—to lighten the monotony of roast mutton, greens, and rice-pudding.

Let all those dwellers in the country who have not contributed to the Hospital Sunday Fund, ease their consciences by promptly packing up some delightful hampers of fruit and flowers, and send them off to some City Hospitals—and let them go and see for themselves the delight and pleasure these hampers afford. And it is well to bear in mind that dainty pats of real country butter, and jugs of cream, and other such little luxuries, are the finest tonics for the really sick, whose appetites need more tempting than is afforded by regulation Hospital diet.

MR. BEERBOHM TREE is taking an active part in the organising of "A Home of Rest and Nursing" for members of the theatrical profession. This Home is said to be an outcome of the Hospital Bed Committee, which was formed some time ago, and is a welcome development of that scheme.

THE death is announced of Miss Laura Edwards, whose life-long work had made her one of the most valued women in Bristol. She was the chief organiser of the Nurses' Training Institution and Home, the Bristol Charity Organisation Society, the District Nursing Society and the Girls' Club. Miss Edwards began her work at a time when general nursing reform, the nursing of the poor and kindred causes, met

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