

those suffering from physical disease required thorough and scientific training to fit them for their work, no serious attempt was being made to elevate the status of the Asylum Nurse, although the Nursing of mental cases requires more tact and professional proficiency than ordinary cases. Another lady expressed a somewhat similar opinion, remarking that, while a sort of saintly halo attached to the Hospital Nurse, an Asylum Nurse, who ministered to a mind diseased, as well as to enfeebled bodies, was looked upon as little better than a domestic servant.

When Attendants are thus overworked and underpaid, and are taught almost to despise their calling in life, it is not to be wondered at that cases of inhumanity should from time to time scandalise the public. One ex-Nurse stated that she had given up her occupation, as it was "simply an awful one." Not only were the Attendants overworked, but a system of fines, and in some cases ill-treatment at the hands of the superior officials, made the life intolerable. At one of the metropolitan Asylums—Claybury—the constant changes in progress would practically amount to a new staff of Attendants once a quarter. While London has done little or nothing to improve the position of Asylum Nurses, a proper system of education and training has long been followed in many provincial Asylums.

'The Attendants are as other people,' remarked one of the Matrons, 'for you must remember they do not belong to the same social grade as the Hospital Nurse, and have consequently less education, and it is hardly surprising that a young woman, wearied out by almost incessant bodily and mental strain, should occasionally lose her temper and her head and do things—oftener only say them—which cause what is termed "Another Asylum Scandal." Asylum Nursing calls for great self-command; you have no idea how trying some of the patients are, and it is an absolute public necessity that Nurses in these Institutions should not only have their arduous duties made tolerable, but that their status should be raised by better treatment, pay, and a proper system of education.'

As the London County Council employ more Attendants at the present time than any other authority, it is the endeavour of the Asylum reformers to get them to establish a system of training for Asylum Attendants, and it is proposed to exact from all Nurses, at the end of their period of training, a certificate of proficiency from the Medico-Psychological Association. This Association has already granted over a thousand certificates, but up to the present only fourteen of these are held by London Attendants. The revolution worked in the Nursing of the sick during the last forty years can only be realised by comparing the trained lady Nurses of our great Hospitals with the Sarah Gamps and Betsy Priggs of Charles Dickens, and the conclusion arrived at by the *Dispatch* Commissioner is that a like revolution is sorely needed in the position and treatment of those who minister to the wants and well-being of the insane."

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Medical Matters.

RÖNTGEN RAYS IN DISEASE.



It is generally believed that the X Rays may prove to have some powerful effects in the modification of disease; and it is not unreasonable to argue that a form of light which possesses such remarkable properties and powers of penetrating the tissues as these rays do, might be able to modify changes taking place in those tissues. Indeed, we have recently called attention to the results caused by these rays upon the skin, and experiments which have recently been made in France rather tend to strengthen the belief that, at any rate in Consumption, these Rays may prove to be a valuable curative agent. The experiments in question were briefly as follows:—Eight guinea pigs were inoculated with tuberculous matter. Three of these were exposed to the action of Röntgen's Rays every day, for an hour or longer, for two months. The other five were untreated in any way, and all presented signs of infection; that is to say, they all had abscesses freely discharging and the lymphatic glands in the neighbourhood of the inoculation became swollen and diseased; they all lost flesh and became markedly tubercular. The three animals, on the other hand, in which the site of inoculation was exposed to the X Rays, gained in weight, and at the end of two months were healthy and in good condition; no abscesses appeared, and the lymphatic glands which were at first enlarged and swollen, diminished in size and became healthy. It would be, of course, unwise to consider the case proved by such an incomplete and limited experiment; but at any rate the results reported in this instance should encourage further observations and the use of the Röntgen's Rays as a method of treatment in well-marked cases of tubercular Phthisis.

QUININE SUPPOSITORIES.

ATTENTION has recently been called to an improved and valuable method of giving quinine in the form of suppositories. It is well known to all Nurses that many patients show a most marked idiosyncrasy in reference to this drug, and that even small doses

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