

Annotations.

THE DEPRECIATION OF THE TRAINED NURSE.

How much easier it is for a few detractors to smirch the members of an honourable profession than it is for those who have its best interests at heart to achieve necessary reforms within that profession. We do not hesitate to say that Lady Priestley's article in the *Nineteenth Century* upon "Nurses à la mode" will do untold harm to many, who, both as nurses and as women, are worthy of all honour, and that her depreciatory statements will find a ready credence with a certain portion of the public. On the other hand, the efforts of those who wish to save trained nurses from the odium of being classed with the many black sheep which infest their calling, meet with very little response or assistance. As a matter of common justice, the legal registration of trained nurses must be hastened on, if they are to be subjected to attacks such as that made by Lady Priestley both upon their professional capacity and their moral character.

Following upon Lady Priestley's article, and commenting upon it, comes a review in the *Cheltenham Examiner* from which we cull the following extract:—

"I suppose our civilisation is better organised than in the days of the Borgias, and later, in these isles, but human nature does not change, and what was possible then is possible now. In all ranks the criminal element is to be found, and the poisoner in unsuspected guise is often at one's elbow. It is only the clumsy operators that are found out. I heard an eminent physician once say that he was convinced that many more people were helped out of the world than we had any idea of. When life hangs in the balance—a little tip, and the business is done."

So that now, not content with insinuating that nurses are immoral, they are also to be held up to opprobrium as capable of poisoning their patients. Can depreciation go further? The attack in the *Cheltenham Examiner* is the more cowardly in that it is anonymous. Trained nurses, however, have the position in their own hands, and if they hesitate to undertake the nursing of private cases, and assuredly the best class of nurses will do so if the recent slanders are allowed to go unanswered, the public will only have themselves to thank if they are handed over to the care of the harpies with whom they seem only too ready to confound an honourable body of women.

A BRIGHT LITTLE THING.

At a recent meeting of the Lewes Board of Guardians it was reported by the Visiting Committee that they had interviewed the medical officer, and master and matron, and made other inquiries, with respect to the appointment of a nurse to fill a vacancy. They reported further that Dr. Crosskey, the medical officer, expressed himself as desirous of the appointment of a "certificated nurse." The master and matron objected to this as "they had found certificated nurses very difficult to work with." The committee recommended the appointment of the assistant-nurse (described as a "bright little thing") to the post.

One guardian regretted that they had "got over the doctor in the matter of having a trained nurse."

We entirely agree with this gentleman. It seems almost incredible that within a short distance of London, at the end of the nineteenth century, the opinion of the medical officer of an infirmary as to the most suitable person for nursing the sick should be over-ridden by that of the untrained master and matron of the workhouse. These officials, as a rule, in addition to being ignorant of nursing matters, are drawn from the uneducated classes, and as such would probably be prejudiced against the instalment of a nurse of a different stamp to themselves. We hold that the medical officer is the official who should determine what is desirable in the way of nursing qualifications, and we should be glad to see that Dr. Crosskey had refused to submit to this decision, and that he had insisted upon the appointment of a certificated nurse. It is, doubtless, desirable that a nurse should be "bright," but the "brightest little thing" in the world cannot make up by her personal charms for an inadequate knowledge of the duties she is called upon to fulfil. We are glad to see that wholesome fear of a "severe reprimand" from the Local Government Board has prevented the appointment of a pauper as assistant nurse at the Lewes Workhouse.

CONGRATULATIONS.

A COMPLIMENTARY dinner was given on the 28th inst. at the Holborn Restaurant to Dr. R. R. Rentoul, Mr. G. Brown, and Mr. G. Jackson, the candidates of the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association for election on the Medical Council. Dr. Bedford Fenwick, the President of the Association, occupied the chair, and a large number of ladies and gentlemen were present.

In proposing "The Association Candidates," the Chairman stated that of the three candidates supported by the Association, Dr. Rentoul and

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