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EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.

No. 661.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1900.

VOL. XXV.

Editorial.

THE CRUX OF THE CROYDON CASE.

The progress of the case at issue between the Matron of the Croydon Infirmary, and the Croydon Guardians, is being watched with much interest in the nursing world. Firstly, because it is practically a test case, and therefore of extreme importance to all nurses working in Poor Law Institutions, secondly—and this is most hopeful—because the nurses, as well as the Matron, have realized the principle involved, and the injury done to them if the resolution of the Guardians is put into force, and are at one with the Matron in her opposition to it.

The nurses, in short, understand that they with their Matron are members of a profession, that as head of the training school of which they are pupils she represents their interests, and that anything which acts prejudicially upon her professional prestige affects their own in the same way. In past days this would not have been the case. The relation of Matron and Nurses was analogous to that of Mistress and Maid, and an attempt on the part of a Matron to enforce discipline would not so very long ago have been regarded by probationers

as tyranny on her part. Now, however, nursing is every day evolving more and more as a profession. It is recognised not as a domestic vocation but as a highly specialized scientific calling, and this being so it follows that the practical education and supervision of nursing pupils must be entrusted to a member of the nursing profession, who is recognized, and given the authority necessary to the maintenance of her position, as Principal, or Superintendent, of the Nurse Training School. Nursing is in fact at the present time on an educational plane, and as our schools of medicine are officered by eminent members of the medical profession, so if schools of nursing are to be organized on a satisfactory basis they must be officered in like manner by members of the nursing profession. This point is thoroughly well understood by the nursing staff of the Croydon Infirmary, and they have acted in a constitutional and proper manner in representing in a petition to the Guardians the injury which will result to them if any other system of control is enforced.

We have observed with much satisfaction that the Local Government Board appreciates the seriousness of the question at issue. This Board has, indeed, of late years, both in Great

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