

experience in the practical nursing of general medical and surgical patients. We gather from our correspondent that the admission of these asylum attendants was advocated by the Board of Management of the Bond, and that, after an animated discussion in which, we are pleased to observe, many medical men protested against the registration of asylum attendants as trained nurses, the proposal was carried.

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THIS is, in our opinion, a very false step, and one which will have to be retraced later when Dutch nurses evolve out of their present somewhat dependent position, and, to a large extent, manage their own affairs, as, no doubt, they will do in the distant future, instead of relying almost entirely, as they do now, upon the guidance of medical men.

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IT is this medical influence which has claimed the right to admit asylum attendants as trained nurses; and it is plain, from the evidence before us, that the medical element in "The Hague Committee for the Training of Nurses" is quite absolute.

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AGAIN, although we have every sympathy with Dr. A. Couvée in his anxiety to raise the moral standard of Dutch private nurses, we cannot agree with restrictive suggestions as to dealing with this evil—of placing the trained private nurses of Holland under the control of Committees of Societies, and in religious houses—thereby encouraging that fatal lack of personal responsibility which is the preventive, and not the means, of moral growth in women.

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HUMAN beings, male and female, must be encouraged to order their lives on the basis of reason and self-control, if there is to be any hope of permanent improvement in their moral fibre. To hedge nurses around with Committees of Control, which think for them, in Homes, surrounded with palisades, which shut out the pure light of day, can but produce a flabby and unreliable race of nurses. And this attitude of men towards women, especially in doctors towards nurses, is the most cruel, as it is the most futile course of action. The pity of it is that so often men treat women as idiots, with the kindest intentions in the world. From the idiot to the lunatic—and again, from the lunatic, to the criminal—the gradations are easy. If men *will* go on encouraging idiocy in women, it is inevitable that their time should be largely wasted in readjusting the scale, in dealing with the criminals their system has created.

## The Hospital World.

### CRISIS AT THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL, QUEEN SQUARE.

IT is now some five years since we called attention to the unsatisfactory management of the nursing department at the National Hospital, Queen Square. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that a crisis has arisen between the medical staff and the Board of Management, and that the former have issued a circular on the condition of affairs to the Governors.

The medical staff are not satisfied with the arrangements for the admission of the patients, and, therefore, desire voting power on the Board, so that they may institute reforms; and, from their numerous complaints, the whole dispute appears to narrow itself down to the fact that the autocratic government of a Secretary Superintendent with the best intentions in the world, is inadvisable. Of course it is, because no layman—however conscientious and devoted to the interests of the institution, and no one will dispute the fact that Mr. Burford Rawlings is both—can, in one life time, be a first-class financial administrator, resident medical officer, and trained nurse at the same time. Now this is what the Secretary Superintendent at the National Hospital has been attempting for the past twenty years.

Twenty years ago, neither the medical treatment nor nursing of the sick, were as specialised and all-important factors in the hospital world as they are to-day. Hospitals were ruled by domestic administrators, but the rapid development of medical science, of which nursing is a part, has altered all this, and made it imperative that the managers of these institutions should realise the importance of science in the treatment of the sick, and give ample power to the medical and nursing officers in the discharge of their duties towards the patients.

Now, at the National Hospital, Queen Square, this result of evolution in medical science has not been distinctly grasped by the Committee, and from the circular issued and signed by the whole medical staff, we doubt if these gentlemen quite appreciate the situation either. The medical staff, in claiming their undoubted right to exercise authority in medical details, such as the admission of patients, etc., also appear to consider that the domestic details in connection with the nursing department should be performed by them, and instance the insufficiency of draw-sheets, pointing out that these portions of bed-linen are merely dried when wetted, used again, and thus conduce to the formation of bed-sores!!

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)