

Legal Matters.

A CHARGE OF UNDUE INFLUENCE.

An action was heard this week in the Chancery Division, before Mr. Justice Farwell, brought by Colonel Alexander Hamilton des Barres and Mr. James Stuart des Barres, the executors of the late Colonel des Barres, a retired Colonel of the Royal Artillery, against Miss Irene Kate Hayles, M.R.B.N.A. a professional nurse. The action was for the recovery of a quantity of Railway Stock, articles of jewellery, &c., alleged to have been obtained by undue influence by the nurse, while in professional attendance upon the Colonel. The case for the plaintiffs was that Miss Hayles, who was engaged to nurse the late Colonel des Barres—suffering from dipsomania—obtained a great ascendancy over the patient and assumed complete control of his household establishment. When he was the worse for drink, which was a daily occurrence, he passed entirely under her influence, and Miss Hayles caused him to transfer shares to her amounting to nearly one-third of his personal estate. After his death the defendant took possession of several boxes and portmanteau of the deceased, filled them with his property, and took them away.

Evidence was given by Mrs. Charlotte Cox, niece of the deceased, who said that when she visited her uncle about Christmas, 1901, he was intoxicated. On her second visit Nurse Hayles had discarded her uniform. The nurse never left her alone with the patient.

Mrs. Florence Boake, M.R.B.N.A., of 1, Westbourne Square, W., said that she sent the defendant to 17, Brunswick Gardens to nurse Colonel des Barres. While at Brighton Miss Hayles came up to London, and she saw she had discarded her uniform. The nurse then said in a joking kind of way, "What would you say if I married him?" (the Colonel). The witness was disgusted. She insisted on the nurse leaving the case. Miss Hayles objected, on the ground that the Colonel had reformed and benefited so much, and apparently the nurse stayed with the patient to the end.

Nurse Sylvester, who was engaged as a second nurse just before the Colonel's death, said Nurse Hayles conducted herself as the mistress of the house and treated the Colonel in a very imperious manner. He only resented her attitude towards the last.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton des Barres, brother of the deceased, said that Nurse Hayles always prevented him seeing his brother. When he spoke to her about the Railway Stock Nurse Hayles said, "If he had lived longer I should have had more out of him."

The parties ultimately came to an agreement, the terms of which were not stated.

Nursing Echoes.

*** All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



The annual report of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses is now published, and can be obtained on application to the Hon. Secretary, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, price 1½d., post free, or 7d. for six copies. All nurses should obtain a copy of this report, and acquaint themselves with the history and progress of the Registration movement. Application forms for membership of the Society can be obtained from the same address.

On Saturday last a very pleasant Social Gathering took place at St. Andrew's House Club, Mortimer Street, W., when the excellent musical programme provided was greatly appreciated. The performers were:—*Pianoforte*, the Misses Lockwood; *first violins*, Miss Amabel Marshall and Miss Agnes Debenham; *second violin*, Miss Frances Marshall; *viola*, Miss Debenham; *violoncello*, Miss Edith Debenham. The Club which, under the management of Miss Edith Debenham, is always attractive, looked its best, and a room recently charmingly furnished as an additional sitting-room can now be used by members for the private reception of their guests. The Club has certainly met a long-felt need for nurses, and we do not wonder that already there are rumours that the demands upon it exceed its accommodation.

In the House of Commons Mr. Brodrick, in reply to a question from Sir John Leng as to the reason for the withdrawal of the privilege of wearing clasps with their South African medals from nurses, recently said: "The grant of clasps was confined to those persons who were either combatants or who intended to go under fire. The privilege cannot, therefore, be extended to the nurses." Then why was the privilege first extended and then withdrawn? This was the point which required an answer in Sir John Leng's question, and which was carefully ignored by the Secretary of State for War.

The death of Cardinal Vaughan removes a forceful and indomitable spirit from our midst. It is interesting to learn that the nurses who attended him in his last illness were supplied by the Temperance Male Nurses' Co-operation, Ltd., 15, Great Marylebone Street, W.

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