

seven months from bronchitis and convulsions two months after its adoption. It had previously been out at nurse for a weekly payment." "A great many of the children visited were the children of married people living apart on account of the intemperate habits of one, usually the mother. Such children, as a rule, show signs of previous neglect; one died a fortnight after it was placed out. I have visited these cases as often as possible, and again have found little actual neglect, but a considerable amount of improper feeding, neglect of sanitation in the houses, and other unsatisfactory conditions highly prejudicial to the health of the children, and only likely to be remedied by regular inspection."

Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, presiding last week at a meeting of the Kirkcaldy Victoria Nursing Association, said that though it was fourteen years since the Queen's Nurses first began to work in Kirkcaldy, they had never had a sufficient income from subscriptions to meet their expenditure. She pleaded in her usual effective way for support, and said it was quite impossible to tabulate the amount of suffering and ill-health which had been prevented by good nursing and the faithful carrying out of medical orders by skilled and trained nurses.

The excellence of the training in mental nursing given at the Stirling District Asylum at Larbert is well known, and has been referred to on various occasions in these columns. The Medical Superintendent of this institution, Dr. G. M. Robertson, is ambitious that the care given to the insane in asylums should approximate to that given to the physically sick in well-managed general hospitals, and has spared no pains to attain this ideal. We find ourselves much in sympathy with him, both in the interests of insane persons and because we have always contended that asylum-trained nurses are entitled to a professional education corresponding to that of their colleagues trained in a general school. Dr. Robertson, from opinions based on a prolonged practical experience is keenly in favour of the employment of women nurses for the insane. His colleague, Dr. A. R. Urquhart, Superintendent of the Royal Asylum, Perth, on the other hand, desires to retain the services of men in the wards to a great extent, and in the last issue of *Asylum News* vigorously protests against what he describes as Dr. Robertson's "uncalled-for attack on men-workers." Both are, of course, entitled to their own opinions, but the system at Stirling, which is in accordance with the most enlightened and approved methods employed in the United States, has proved so successful, that we do not think Dr. Robertson need give more than a passing thought to the knocks he is sure to receive as a pioneer in a desirable and necessary reform. It is the fate of all who are somewhat in advance of their generation.

Dr. D. W. Samways, of Paris, writes to the *British Medical Journal* on "Sick Nursing in France":—

"In your article on Dr. Marc Blatin's recent book on medical nursing and nurses in France, in your issue of January 14th, you express the hope that, what you entitle his 'painfully realistic and pitifully gruesome' description of a busy operating day, is a 'picture over-drawn.'

"When studying medicine in France, less than ten years ago, I commonly saw patients when being anaesthetised, held down by six or eight students, while struggling not against the anaesthetic, but against simple suffocation. My impression at Montpellier was that patients were not given enough air, and, if they tried to get it, the mask was clapped on tight, and they were forcibly held down till, exhausted by struggling and suffocation, no further trouble was experienced or possible. Dr. Blatin does not overpaint his picture as regards the giving of anaesthetics.

"The nursing inefficiency in France can be judged from the following:—In 1896, when 'walking the hospitals' in Paris, I asked a patient whom I was examining in a surgical ward of no less a hospital than the 'Hôtel Dieu,' when he was washed last. He replied, 'I have not been washed.' I then asked him how long he had been in the hospital. He replied, 'Two months.' 'Do you mean to tell me,' said I, 'that you have been in this ward two months and not been washed?' He answered, 'I cannot go to the bath myself, and unless you can you don't get washed.' I then went to a patient lying opposite to him with a fractured femur, and asked him to let me see his splint. As I lifted the bed clothes he said, 'Take care, sir, it's all alive.'

"The nursing staff is usually utterly inadequate for proper nursing in a French hospital, and no scientific training for nurses involving attention to detail is possible.

"It is the habit of English people to think most things are better abroad. In the matter of hospitals, at least, England is miles ahead of France. The surgery is as good and the after-treatment infinitely superior.

"One other point is very striking—that is, the relative economy of our hospital system. Half the patients in a Paris hospital would be treated as out-patients in London. The upkeep of hospitals in Paris, being dependent on external grants (Government or municipal), any injured man has a claim to be received, and the hospital authorities have little economic interest in refusing him admission.

"I heartily endorse the opinion you express 'that if those in authority in France would but read his (Dr. Marc Blatin's) excellent book and follow its precepts they would confer on their country an incalculable boon and gain from the poor an everlasting gratitude.'

The recent examinations at the Somerset Hospital, Cape Town, resulted in Miss F. Cockeroff gaining the Silver Medal for third year's nurses. Miss Hartman was awarded the Ardern Prize for second year's nurses, and Miss Macaskill the Resident Surgeon's Prize.

Four candidates from the hospital recently went up for the Colonial Medical Council's Examination for Nurses and all passed.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)