

Legal Matters.

BOGUS PRINCESS SENTENCED.

Once again "Princess Soltykoff," alias "Lady Muriel Paget," alias Mrs. Margaret Prebble, has appeared in the dock (this time at the Old Bailey) to answer to charges of fraud against tradesmen. We reported in 1902 that Mrs. Prebble was convicted at the East Suffolk Quarter Sessions, of thefts proved to have been committed whilst nursing, and of obtaining money under false pretences. She was then sentenced to fifteen months' hard labour, the police regarding her as an adventuress and inconsequent liar. During the evidence in the present proceedings the police stated that she has had four or five situations as a nurse since her last incarceration. We wonder who employed her.

Mrs. Prebble's history, related by Inspector Drew, of Scotland Yard, is that she is the daughter of a joiner in Liverpool. She left her home in 1893, and shortly afterwards gave birth to a child. She then obtained various situations as a nurse. Subsequently she assumed the title of Princess Soltykoff, to which she had no right whatever. At the last trial Prince Soltykoff attended on subpoena to say the story of her marriage with his son Alexis was an entire fabrication.

While acting as a nurse she induced her present husband, then a student at Guy's, to marry her. When his relatives discovered she was an adventuress they cut him off, and being unable to continue his studies, he joined the Army. He had done his best for his wife, but she seemed beyond control, breaking out when under the influence of drugs and drink.

She only assumed the name of Paget after liberation from her last sentence. She was regarded as a very good nurse, and would, according to the inspector, do well if she confined herself to that.

We think it more than questionable whether the public would do as well if left, when ill, to this woman, who has dragged the name of an honourable profession into a criminal court. We wonder also what doctors entrusted their patients to her care. Let us hope that before the expiration of the very lenient sentence of eighteen months' hard labour, imposed by Judge Rentoul, the State Registration of Trained Nurses will be in force, when Mrs. Prebble—who undoubtedly has had experience in several hospitals—will find herself outside the pale of the Register.

A NURSE RECOVERS PROFESSIONAL FEES.

At the Derby County Court Nurse Stone, of London, sued Mr. F. W. Cox, of Derby, to recover two guineas for professional services and railway expenses between London and Derby. For the plaintiff it was stated that Mrs. Cox, when ill, was subject to absolutely ungovernable temper and irritability. In a previous illness she had had five nurses from the Nursing Institution at Derby, and this was probably why the Institution refused to supply her with nurses in the future. When she had been in the house three or four days Mrs. Cox told the nurse to pack her box that moment, if not she would have her turned out. She also swore at her. Mrs. Cox admitted that she might sometimes lose her temper and use strong

language. His Honour Judge Lindley said he was bound to accept the plaintiff's story, and gave judgment for £2 9s. and costs.

A VERY SAD STORY.

The sad death of Miss Catherine Cuddy, a professional nurse, was recently the occasion of an inquest. Miss Cuddy, who was residing in a boarding house in Porchester Place, hanged herself in her bedroom as the result of lack of work, and of a debt of £7 to her landlady. She was a member of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and Miss A. J. Hobbs, the Secretary, said she was an excellent nurse but had had very few engagements during the past two years. She rejected with scorn many offers of a guinea a week. "I give my best work," she would say, "and I will not take less for anybody."

The jury returned a verdict of suicide whilst temporarily insane.

We sympathise sincerely with this poor nurse in her refusal to try and make ends meet on a miserable pittance, for remember she had to live between cases.

Many of those present at the recent meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association were horrified at the way in which some of the nurse members of the Association voted away the liberties of their colleagues. When we realise, however, that on the morning of the day of the meeting the Secretary of the Association had had to give evidence at the inquest on a member who had hanged herself because she could not obtain employment, and we remember Dr. Bezly Thorne's threat to that meeting, that if medical practitioners were not accorded the representation he desired on the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession they would not employ registered nurses, but would set to work to organise a body of nurses amenable to themselves, we can realise what is really at the root of this obsequious acquiescence to the dictates of the Hon. Officers.

Many of those so voting were members of the Chartered Nurses' Society, and as such dependent on medical members of the R.B.N.A., who form its Committee, for their work, and consequently for their livelihood. It is this industrial dependence of the woman worker which is at the root of her abject moral cowardice, and which points to the need for the State to protect her against herself.

An Association of the Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries.

A meeting of the Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries will be held on Wednesday, February 21st, at 8 p.m., in the Court Room of the Society's Hall, Water Lane, Blackfriars, E.C., for the purpose of founding an Association, confirming constitution and rules, and enrolling members.

Ladies and gentlemen desirous of becoming members, but unable to attend, will please communicate (if they have not already done so) with the Hon. Sec., Mr. Albert Howell, Hackney Dispensary, Rosebery Place, Dalston, N.E. The subscription is fixed at 2s. 6d.

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