

This letter is only one more proof of the injustice to young women eager for efficient training—when they find themselves in institutions where no systematic training is provided, and worse luck still—where a Committee not only neglects its duty in this particular, but keeps persons in office, from whom decent women should be protected.

The *Lancet's* special correspondent in Australia sends the following report from a medical point of view of the Bush Nursing scheme:—

"A special meeting of the Victorian branch of the British Medical Association was held to hear an outline of Lady Dudley's scheme for "bush nurses," which was communicated by Mr. Boulton, of London. The scheme at the outset was said to be intended for the organisation of district nursing throughout Australia and its gradual extension to outlying districts. This was the plan that had succeeded in Great Britain and Canada, and Australia presented less difficulty than the latter in that there were already existent small country hospitals which could be utilised as bases for beginning work. The proposed organisation consisted of:—(1) A federal committee, whose duty it was to see that conditions were standardised all over Australia, and which would appoint nursing inspectors to see that the scheme was working smoothly. (2) Each State would have a central committee, whose duty was to see that nurses were available and adequately trained. Every hospital trained nurse would have to undergo six months' experience of district nursing in the city before being sent out; and would also require to be proficient in maternity work. The State committee would also see that payment was adequate, and that no trespass on the function of the doctor was permitted. (3) In each town there would be a local committee, whose duty would be to see that the nurse was properly housed, and to provide means of transport. It would also arrange all financial matters, and the nurse would receive no money from patients at all. The local bodies would be represented on the State committees, and from these the federal council would be elected. It was not intended to thrust nurses on the people. Each town or district could apply at its own discretion, and the nurse, if not fully occupied, might possibly lecture on matters of hygiene in the local schools. The meeting received the address sympathetically, but a good deal of doubt was expressed as to the necessity for anything of the kind. Public enthusiasm has been somewhat lacking, especially in Victoria. New South Wales has shown more energy, and already a considerable sum has

been raised by subscription and other means. The conditions in Australia are so wholly different from Great Britain and Canada that outside the cities there are practically no people that could be termed unable to pay for skilled nursing or unable to have their sick removed to hospital. Possibly in parts of Queensland and Tasmania the provision of nurses in outlying districts would have some real service."

The danger of nursing the tuberculous in sanatoria has heretofore been considered so slight as to be negligible, but *American Medicine*, touching on the question, says "it is often argued that in defence of these institutions that in effect they are the safest places in the world on account of the great care exercised to destroy all bacilli escaping from the patients. As usual with all such unqualified medical opinions, a very false impression has been conveyed, for we have recently learned of two female nurses who have contracted pulmonary tuberculosis in a sanatorium situated in a climate which has been widely advertised as God's own for the cure and prevention of the disease. With everything in their favour as to climate and hygiene they have been infected by their patients, and their sad plight conveys the lesson that there is great danger from contact with any infection. It was only a few years ago that we thought typhoid a very safe disease to nurse, but we are now appalled at the enormous number of contact cases, and have reversed our teaching to the end that nurses be guarded with extreme precautions. Similarly, though to a less extent of course, we must warn all those in contact with the tuberculous. Perhaps the two nurses we mention had become reckless from the proverbial contempt of dangers daily encountered, or have been grossly careless, but even so they show that the occupation is not as safe as we believed."

A trained nurse should be an exquisitely clean and careful woman, but many women who attend on tuberculous patients are very insufficiently trained, and are, therefore, ignorant of the elementary principles of asepsis. It is just in this direction the danger of infection lies. All attendants on sick people suffering from infectious diseases or not, should, from the day they enter the sick room, live by well defined laws of *absolute personal cleanliness*. Breathe no dirt, swallow no dirt, touch no dirt, scrub, clean, and disinfect, and cultivate a healthy appetite, and do a bit of deep thinking every day. Mental effort is the stimulant which makes the physical wheels go round, and keeps the whole body in health.

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