

mutton was served, and on the others butter or cheese. The supper was, for four days, milk porridge, and for three water-gruel. Certainly, compared with our modern dietaries, this was very disagreeable fare, and no doubt entailed great suffering to a certain class of patients. Tea, coffee, or cocoa was virtually unknown, and as a substitute, where the patient could pay, beer, in vast quantities, appears to have been admitted to the Wards, and this certainly constituted a great evil. Not only were patients often under the influence of alcohol, but the Nurses, too, were frequently muddled, and worse; and doubtless on occasions accidents resulted and much ill-treatment—a condition of things which was not at all likely to be known outside the walls of the Hospital itself.’”

THE scheme for Nurses’ pensions, which Mr. Editor has had in organisation, is now practically completed, several obstacles having cropped up from time to time requiring to be overcome, and he hopes shortly to announce it as being complete in all its details. Its benefits will fully equal the National Pension Fund, whilst the payments for its privileges will be considerably less.

I LEARN from the *New York Medical Record* that a little excitement was caused recently in the Training School for Nurses at the Philadelphia Hospital by the admission of a coloured pupil from Oberlin, O. Some of the white pupils objected to her presence among them and drew up a protest against her admission, but were persuaded to withdraw their opposition, and now harmony once more reigns. I wonder what would be the result if a “coloured” pupil were introduced in any Hospital in this country. Rather one of curiosity, I should imagine, as I do not know of a single one of our many Institutions possessing other than white Nurses.

FROM the same journal I cull the following “frivolous” little piece:—“A wayfarer lately, in a primitive part of Kent, inquired of a rustic whom he met whether there was a doctor near, as he had hurt his foot and wanted it looked to. ‘Doctor, sir?’ said the man, with a knowing shake of the head. ‘There ain’t no such thing about here. If we sprain ourselves, or has the toothache, we go to the blacksmith; but, thank God, we all dies natural deaths.’” S. G.

EVERY man who succeeds inclines to ascribe all the credit to his own ability, shrewdness, industry; but when he fails he lays the blame wholly upon others, upon circumstances, upon fate.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

DISPENSERS.

To dispense means, according to the dictionary, to distribute; but it has also another meaning in medical parlance, namely, to dispense or make up medicines. Most Doctors have dispensers under them (dispensers who rule supreme in the surgery), though some combine both rôles, whilst the London specialist and the London Physician send their patients off with some magical signs, wrought by pen on paper, in their pockets to the nearest chemist’s drug-shop. Indeed, to both dispenser and Doctor the chemist, a creation of comparatively modern date, is a decided bug-bear. Still, though the surgery in the Doctor’s house threatens to become a thing of the past in towns; yet still in the country and in the villages the dispenser’s art will be needed for many a long year, and this is work one can assuredly advise being taken up by ladies seeking a livelihood, though as yet the supply is equal to the demand, for at present the sight of seeing a pleasant young lady sitting enthroned amongst the drugs, and quickly pouring out from first this bottle, then that, would surprise and shock the average country bumpkin, and would cause him, maybe, to lose that faith which is such an adjunct to medical cure. Formerly it was the fashion to be apprenticed to a Doctor, and it was the young apprentice who doled out the drugs and labelled the bottles, oftentimes wrong; but most Hospital Students laugh now at the very thought of apprenticeship; and if it comes to a question of men or women dispensers, the latter prove oftentimes cheaper and more useful also in the house, acting as secretary usually as well, for the two duties are generally combined by far-sighted Doctors. Thus type-writing and shorthand are useful recommendations when applying for such a post. Often these secretarial duties are as manifold and astounding as were those of the character in “Nicholas Nickleby.” The salaries range from £30 to £70 or £80, according to the Doctor’s position. It is necessary to know Latin, and *medical Latin* in particular, to have some knowledge of chemistry and botany, whilst arithmetic and book-keeping are useful; but the principal things necessary are not to be taught—*i.e.*, accurateness and scrupulous care. The necessary education in medical knowledge will be given at the new Hospital for Women for a small preliminary fee. But this is a work not to be taken up easily, but one to be carefully thought out, for the responsibility is great, very great. Full particulars can be had at the Hospital. Sometimes ladies are employed as dis-

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