

tend the domestic department alone of a hospital of fifty beds means comparative idleness, and that no gentlewoman, trained as the nursing head of every hospital or infirmary should undoubtedly be, would be satisfied to be deprived of all interest in the ward work and well-being of the sick, for whose comfort her more trying and routine duties have to be daily performed.

To be placed in such a position is to be asked "to make bricks without straw." When a lady is appointed matron of a small hospital, she becomes responsible to her lay authorities and to the public for the general management of the establishment, which means that in every department efficiency with economy shall be maintained, that her subordinates, nurses and servants, shall be diligent and upright in the performance of their individual duties. The one goal being the well being and recovery of the sick, and unless this lady be endowed with sufficient and indisputable authority, how is it possible for her either to perform her own duties satisfactorily or to insist that others should do likewise? Without such authority her position is an anomaly and failure inevitable, even with the most conscientious endeavours, and no woman of ability (such as every hospital matron should be), unless she wishes to eat her heart out in desperation and self-contempt, will ever undertake duties for the efficient performance of which she has neither scope nor power.

The matron of a small hospital should be the undisputed head, and solely responsible for the nursing and domestic departments; she should be the superintendent, guide, and friend of every female worker within its walls, as Miss Nightingale has written: "herself the best nurse in the place, the model of all her nurses would wish to be." She should attend the visiting staff during their visit, *hear* their directions given so that she may *know* what they are, and *see* that they are carried out by those whose duty it is to perform the details of nursing; she should be at hand, and actively engaged in the theatre, where the charge nurse and probationer will have their numerous and respective duties during all operations. No department in the hospital where the women are at work must be closed to her inspection by night or day. Performance of what must be a matron's duties on any other terms is not only difficult but *impossible*; therefore, they should not be undertaken by an *honourable* woman on any other terms, because she will only subject herself to the merest humiliation, and in the inevitable and general demoralization which will result become herself demoralized and quite unfitted to assume an attitude of command.

After three years' futile warfare, I should hope the lay and medical authorities of the Dorset County Hospital will see that for the sake of the sick it is their distinct duty to have a truce; and it is to be

hoped that the former will obtain the services of a thoroughly-trained sister who has a good knowledge of housekeeping to fill the vacant post of matron, from a large liberal-minded hospital, where she has had charge of large wards, where she has gained experience in teaching probationers and in superintending the work of trained staff nurses, and where one of her principal duties has been to maintain a spirit of loyalty and discipline amongst her fellow-workers. She must be a woman of high aim, earnest purpose, possessed of tact and complete self-control, and I have no doubt that in a short time the Dorset County Hospital will regain its equilibrium and rank with such a sister hospital as, for example, the County Hospital at Lincoln, where the excellent system of having a lady superintendent of *nursing* (not only of nurses) has been for some years in vogue, and where perfect unity with efficiency prevails, to the undisputed advantage of all concerned.

[We shall be glad to hear the views of our readers upon this important subject to the nursing profession, and open our Correspondence Columns to it accordingly.—ED.]

NURSING ECHOES.

* * * Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are specially invited for these columns.

Miss Wood, the late Lady Superintendent of the Hospital for Sick Children, received, as might have been expected, many most gratifying proofs of the affection and esteem felt for her by her fellow-workers, on the occasion of her departure from the institution she had served so long and so faithfully. For example, among other mementoes presented to her were the following articles: a handsome walnut-wood writing-table, bearing a brass plate inscribed with her name and the occasion of its presentation; a Sutherland-table, and occasional-table in walnut-wood; a handsome china tea-service; and a *suite* of bedroom furniture. The list of the donors' names included everyone, past and present, who had been at all associated with her work, even down to the out-door attendants and the scrubbers.

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A CORRESPONDENT, who has from the first been most helpful by sending the news of St. Bartholomew's doings, writes me this week: "To show how useful in these days of the 'Competition Wallah' a first-class certificate is to nurses, I have collected and send you the names of ladies who were placed first in the examinations at St. Bartholomew's during the last few years, and the positions they have taken in the nursing world. Miss Huxley, Lady Superintendent of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin; Miss Ellen

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