

absence. But it is necessary, from the nurse's point of view, to take into consideration the fiendish ingenuity with which patients' friends cross-question you and try to trap you into a definite statement. I once acted as sister-in-charge of a West End Nursing Home, and I spent a good deal of my conversational powers in fencing with friends thirsting—not unnaturally—for definite opinions and stray scraps of medical information. And every nurse is not clever enough to parry the searching inquiries of a keen woman of the world. This is a literal account of how nurses are trapped :—

SCENE—Private house.

Patient's Friend. Nurse (newly arrived).

Patient's Friend : "Have you ever seen any case like this before, Nurse?"

Nurse admits she has—several.

P. F. : "Were they ever given castor oil?"

Nurse, suspicious and on her guard, says : "Yes—sometimes—when ordered."

P. F. : "Now, I had a sister who used to take Dash's tasteless castor oil. She liked it. Have you ever seen it used in such a case as this, Nurse?"

Nurse admits she has—sometimes.

P. F. : "Did it act well?"

Nurse, who thinks she sees her way clearly, says : "Yes, it did."

Enter Doctor.

P. F. : "Oh! Doctor, you ordered Tom castor oil. He can't bear it."

Doctor (cheerily) : "Oh, never mind that—nobody likes it—soon over."

P. F. : "But can't he have Dash's tasteless castor oil instead?"

Doctor : "Not at all necessary. This is much better; let him take this."

P. F. : "Oh, but Doctor, Nurse says she has often seen Dash's tasteless castor oil used in exactly similar cases to this, and it acted splendidly. Now, why should not Tom have it?"

Wrath of Doctor. Collapse of Nurse. Triumph of P. F.!!

And we will leave the patient's friend triumphing. The whole question resolves itself into one of supply and demand. Private nurses—sick nurses are wanted—must exist. Magazine articles will not regulate that question. The general public and medical men will continue to avail themselves of their services.

No attack from outside can harm us if we are loyal to one another, to our calling and our duty. We nurses are not perfect, no human being is faultless, certainly no body of human beings. But I think, hope and believe (I am speaking of trained nurses) that we honestly try to do our best, and I am proud to belong to a profession that makes great and grave demands upon its members, who haven't responded unworthily.

M. MOLLETT, Matron,
Royal South Hants Infirmary,
Southampton.

AN ANOMALY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have received various appeals to subscribe to the Prince of Wales' Hospital Fund for London, and would like to state the reasons why I, and many others, men and women, refuse to do so.

Our hospitals contain, besides women and children patients, large staffs of nurses, and we consider that

every institution which has women inmates, either patients or attendants, ought to have women on their boards of management and committees.

This being the Diamond Jubilee of our most Gracious Queen, it seems a slight to her as a woman that in forming the General Council for this scheme of raising money for our hospitals, not one representative woman is included in that Council. If there were one of our lady physicians, or even any unprofessional well-known philanthropic woman on that General Council, we feel sure it would appeal much more strongly to a large section of the general public.

We hear continually of the mismanagement which is so common in our great public institutions, much of which would be obviated by the presence of women on their boards and committees, as it is admitted that in many practical details women can do more than men.

Our hospitals are great households where womanly supervision is essential for economy, efficiency, and decency; for we have all heard of cases which could never have occurred if there had been women in authority on the boards of management.

Until this important reform takes place much support is sure to be withheld from our hospitals.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

EMILY CONYBEARE CRAVEN.

144, Ashley Gardens, Westminster,
February 25th, 1897.

THE VICTORIA CLUB.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was very glad to see in last week's NURSING RECORD a letter from your correspondent "Not a Congenital Idiot." I only wish there were a few more nurses like her. What can be the condition of mind of those persons who found it possible to frame a rule that nurses may be expelled from a public club at the discretion of the secretary "without an explanation?" They must, indeed, think that nurses are idiots, and I have no hesitation in saying that if any nurses join the Victoria Club while rule No. 12 is in force, that the promoters of the club will have rightly estimated their mental capacity. I need scarcely say I do *not* intend to join the Victoria Club, although it would be useful to me in many ways, until the insulting rule as to expulsion is rescinded.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

COMMON SENSE.

[We feel sure Miss Foggo Thompson, the Secretary, being herself a nurse, will see the wisdom of having this objectionable Rule No. 12 altered.—ED.]

THE REGISTRATION OF ASYLUM ATTENDANTS AS NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have followed the correspondence on this subject with deep interest, and, having at one time spent some months in an asylum as a patient, I cannot too earnestly urge upon you the necessity that those attendants who are supposed to nurse sick lunatics should be *trained nurses* before they enter the sick wards of the asylums for the insane. Go on pleading for this—many neglected lunatics will thus be your debtors.

Yours sincerely,

ONE WHO HAS SUFFERED.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)