

barbarous and cruel demand from nurses upon the part of some of the leading abdominal surgeons.

Yours sincerely,

A GYNÆCOLOGICAL NURSE.

AUTOCRACY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I hope, if you think it suitable for insertion, you will find space for a short letter in the NURSING RECORD, for I feel in a moralizing mood, and desirous of imparting my conclusions to others. It seems to me that the lesson to be derived from the recent occurrence at the Royal Free Hospital, which has attracted so much attention, is the need of more courtesy and consideration for patients, and their feelings, on the part of hospital officials, not only those of the Royal Free, but of many others also. I am sure many nurses will bear me out when I say that it is a common failing, on the part of the resident medical and nursing staff of a hospital alike, to expect their patients to have absolute, supreme, and blind faith in them, and to have no wills or minds of their own. Perhaps the treatment of the resident medical officer at the Royal Free was right, and it was considered better that the fracture should not be put up or the dislocation reduced until the next day. This, we know, is frequently the case, but surely this might have been explained to Miss Snowdon. How easy it would have been to say, "It is advisable for you to be admitted, but we shall not be able to do anything till to-morrow." But no! the house surgeon made up his mind as to the proper course to pursue, but it was quite beside the mark to enlighten the person most interested on the subject. Then, again, setting aside the "ostentatious" search for entomological specimens, which was surely unnecessary, I do contend that it is bad nursing to keep a patient for hours in suspense, and momentarily expecting and dreading the setting of a limb, when a reference from the nurse in charge to the house surgeon might have settled the question. "I don't know whether it will be set to-day; very likely not; but, if the house surgeon doesn't come in soon, I'll find out," could soon have been said and acted upon, and Miss Snowdon's mind set at rest. We nurses get into a habit of looking upon our patients as so many dummies to be "taken in and done for" and consequently, I am afraid, often fail in the courtesy, and in the consideration for their feelings as individuals, to which they are undoubtedly entitled.

Yours obediently,

MORALIZER.

"BADGES."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was delighted to learn from your valuable paper, last week, that the leading London Hospitals are adopting distinctive badges for their trained Nurses. Would it not be possible for some such badge to be adopted, common to all hospitals, to be worn by all trained Nurses? Since uniform is so misused, something of the sort becomes almost necessary. I am quite disgusted with the so-called nurses, who masquerade in the country in all kinds of costumes, evidently donned for effect. I am thinking as I write of a young person who strolled about our village in a long grey cloak, with double cape, all lined with scarlet silk, which, I need not say, was displayed to the utmost. A fringe nearly down to the

eyes and a jaunty copy of a uniform bonnet completed this flippant attire. One instinctively knows that such a person is no trained nurse, but how is one to prove it? If we could only have a compulsory badge, or, better still, a compulsory uniform, it would give us power to detect impostors, and we should at once be able to give a cogent reason for refusing to employ such people, even should they be in favour with those members of the medical profession who fear the competition of a Nursing profession, well organized.

Yours faithfully,

PRO BONO PUBLICO.

[There is at present, unfortunately, so little real professional *esprit de corps* amongst Matrons, much less Nurses, that we fear our correspondent's suggestion would not be carried out, and also a sense of isolation (not healthy rivalry) is fostered amongst the Nursing Schools by those who fear the power of well-organized co-operation amongst nurses. There is still only *one* Nursing School in the estimation of the majority of Hospital Committees, and that is the one over which they themselves preside. Time may improve matters, but we fear that until women are enfranchised they will continue to revel in slaves' traits—quite ignorantly of course. *Responsibility* is the only great and infallible impetus to progress.—ED.]

THE INVENTIONS OF NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—It was quite refreshing to read in your issue of last week of an invention by a member of the nursing profession. One looks for them, often, and sees them so very seldom. I am sure that the faculty for inventive genius is not the exclusive property of the male sex, and there are, we know, many practical women in the nursing profession. Is the reason of this dearth of new designs and appliances from nurses caused by inertia, and an unwillingness on their part to communicate their ideas to others, or is it caused by diffidence as to the value of their contrivances? I am inclined to think that the latter is the case, and that nurses need a little encouragement to make their ideas public.

Yours faithfully,

A DIFFIDENT WOMAN.

MANSLAUGHTER OR MURDER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Since writing on this subject I have come across the following extract from the Liverpool Coroner's report, which is, I think, important, and may interest your readers; it is for the year 1895.

"Verdicts of death from excessive drinking (women) had risen from 42 to 84. The deaths of children by suffocation had also increased, and were attributed to parental drunkenness. The numbers for the last five years were 144, 161, 171, 163, 204."

At an annual conference held in the North it was stated "that the annual sacrifice of the innocents was very lamentable in Lancashire."

I earnestly trust that this discussion may not cease till at least some suggestions are made, and the present apathy and indifference with regard to this matter overcome.

Faithfully yours,

LOUISA TWIVING.

February 8th, 1898.

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