

Surgeons have almost always held one or two sometimes even three resident appointments at their own hospital. They have passed all their exams, often taken high degrees, are older than the average Metropolitan House Surgeon, and have generally, if I may use the term, passed the experimental stage of their medical existence:

THE SISTERS.

We come now to a body who go very, very largely to the making of the weal or woe of a hospital—the Sisters. If you have a good, keen, loyal set of Sisters, you can practically face any difficulty. Kipling winds up one of his poems with the lines, "But the backbone of the Army is the non-commissioned man," and the backbone of the hospital is the Sister, and the nursing system which has evolved the Ward Sister—the perfected Ward Sister—deserves well of posterity. Of course the majority of Ward Sisters are not perfected, far from it; still the whole institution is the right principle. We have at this hospital six Ward Sisters, one of whom—the Sister of a small boy's ward of twelve beds—is also Theatre Sister, one Out-Patient Sister, and one Night Superintendent. There is also an Assistant Matron. They are selected and appointed by the Matron, coming first on three months' trial, at the end of which time they can either leave if they like, or their services can be dispensed with. If they, however, stay, they are expected to remain at least one year. As a matter of fact, if they stay, they naturally stay much longer. Some of my Sisters are of my own training, some come from London hospitals, some from larger provincial hospitals. I think the custom, in a County Hospital, of invariably promoting from your own staff is a mistake; it is well sometimes to introduce new ideas, new blood, into a small hospital to prevent the Nursing Staff from growing narrow and self-opinionated.

In her own ward the Sister's authority should be always upheld, and thoroughly admitted. I think in some small hospitals there is a tendency on the part of the Matrons to forget the days when they were themselves Sisters, and to interfere unduly in trifles and ward details, that would well be left to a competent Sister. By every means in her power the Matron should encourage the Sisters to take an interest in their own wards, to regard them as their own domain, to be proud of them, and to fully appreciate their personal responsibility for them. By no other means will she get the same amount of work and keenness out of a good Sister. At the same time the Matron should on no account drop the reins and resign her own authority, she remains always the head of the entire nursing staff; but if she feels secure of her position and her authority, and of

her power to enforce obedience to rules, she will be more ready to allow her Sisters sufficient independence of action to ensure their intelligent co-operation. It would always be my aim, therefore, to promote decentralisation of authority in detail, whilst retaining the supreme command in the Matron's hand.

(To be continued.)

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Queen Alexandra (according to a telegram from Calcutta) has conveyed to Lady Curzon her desire to become a patron of the association for providing medical aid to women in India, and has requested that her wish be made known in India.

The Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital has received £1,000 from "Anonymous" for the purpose of providing additional accommodation for nurses.

At the Quarterly Court of Governors of the London Hospital, the report evinced the splendid energy which of late years has been infused into the hospital by its magnetic chairman, the Hon. Sydney Holland, who said that it had been found absolutely necessary to spend £370,000. Several friends have been extremely generous, and only £138,000 of the sum mentioned remained to be raised in the next four or five years. Special provision was being made for Jews. Mr. Raphael had given £10,000 for the endowment of a ward; £60,000 was being spent for the building and endowment of a convalescent home at Felixstowe, and this work was well on the way. The Isolation Block was nearly finished, the post-mortem and pathological department—the Andrew Clark Memorial—was being pushed on with rapidity, and the centre block too.

Speaking of the nursing staff, he said the Hospital had sent out 26 nurses to the war at the Queen's request. Her Majesty had visited the hospital and said good-bye to them, making them useful presents. One nurse had died in South Africa of enteric, and two more were ill; the remainder were still heroically sticking to their posts, although the exciting part of the war was over.

And it is only one decade ago, that the few progressive governors who claimed that these reforms were "absolutely necessary" were howled down by their partisan colleagues led by Sir Henry Burdett who supported the scandalous mismanagement which corroded every department of the institution. Let pioneers take heart of grace.

Without formal ceremony the new Dental Hospital in Leicester Square, has been opened. The whole of the top storey is used as the "stopping" department, and is well lighted by half-a-dozen large windows facing the north. Last year 69,500 patients were treated in the old hospital near by, which has been sold. A considerable sum is still required to meet the

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