

ward, in the main building, and the Victoria Ward have been made proof against mosquitoes by means of fine galvanised wire gauze fitted to special window sashes, and double sets of spring-doors made of the same material.

The report of the Matron, Miss Annic Jackson, shows that the nursing staff consists at present of the Matron, three Sisters, a probationer, and a male nurse. Incidentally we learn something of the difficulty of maintaining a full nursing staff in a foreign hospital. During the year two Sisters, having fulfilled their three years' contract, returned to England, and in December one left with the consent of the Directors to be married. The same month Sister Watts arrived, and Sister Drury followed in January. In February Sister Watts, whose work was much appreciated during her short time of service in the hospital, most unfortunately died of yellow fever. Later, Miss Drury offered her resignation, which the Directors thought wise to accept, adhering strictly to the conditions specified in her contract. The experiment of engaging a probationer was decided upon, an arrangement which promises well, and Miss Jackson reports very satisfactorily on the work of the male nurse. The Deutsche Hospital Verein have now entered into an agreement with the Strangers' Hospital, under which twelve beds are held at their disposal, the board of the Strangers' Hospital agreeing to have on its staff at least one German-speaking nurse. Nurses will note the advantage of acquiring a knowledge of foreign languages. Certainly it is desirable for private nurses and those who hope to work abroad to be able to speak at least one foreign language with facility.

The account of what the *Cape Times* calls "A Hospital Scandal" is sad reading to all nurses who have high professional ideals, and who cherish a high standard of professional conduct. It appears that a short time ago a fancy dress ball was given at the New Somerset Hospital, Cape Town, as a compliment to some of the nurses who had completed their training and were leaving the hospital. At this ball some of the nurses attended in men's attire, while a medical man was present dressed as a lady. At the end of the ball the Matron, Miss Hopper (one of the Lady Consuls of the Royal British Nurses' Association), was asked if a photograph might be taken of the nurses, and, after some hesitation, consented. It is stated that the Medical Superintendent subsequently told her it was an indecent procedure, and she ought not to have allowed it, and apparently said that "no one who was a decent-minded woman would have been present at the dance."

Subsequently the Committee requested the Matron to resign, which she refused to do, asked

for an inquiry, and put the matter into the hands of her lawyer, who wrote and demanded the nature of the allegations made against her. The Committee supplied a list of the charges, which are said by the Matron's supporters to be of "too vile a nature to be published." A Committee of Inquiry was appointed, which, it is stated, carried out an investigation lasting several days, and this led to the "opening up of many sinister reports regarding the general discipline of the hospital staff."

Eventually "the decision come to was unanimous, all the members of the Medical Board, the House Committee, and the General Board of Management being in accord with the Resident Surgeon." It was decided to determine the tenure of office of the Matron, the Assistant Matron, and one of the hospital doctors, and to give the Matron the option of resigning with the offer of three months' salary (covering the term of notice agreed upon) and of a free passage to England.

A member of the Board of Management of the hospital takes exception to so much prominence being given to the "photograph incident," and stated to our contemporary that "the Matron was asked to resign not because of the photograph of the fancy dress ball, that being only 'the last straw which broke the camel's back.'" As, out of consideration for the Matron, the Committee do not wish to go into the details of the matter, we are unable to offer an opinion on the main points at issue. The facts, however, which have been published, and which we have placed before our readers, will enable them to form some estimate of the condition of things in the hospital. We have always expressed our strong aversion to balls and dances in hospitals. There is a fitness in all things, and in our opinion they should be tabooed in institutions where the sick and dying are gathered together for treatment. We are therefore in sympathy with the Resident Surgeon, and only wonder that he did not veto the ball in the first instance. As to the appearance of the nurses in male attire, there can be but one opinion, that being that it was indecorous and unprofessional to the last degree. The pity of it is that nurses when they go abroad often seem to break all bounds of decorum, and bring their profession into widespread disrepute. Thus we hear that rumours of the junketings and ill-advised behaviour of some nurses in South Africa during the war have been retailed in Germany, and are now being used as an argument against giving trained nurses greater liberty of action. Regrettable as this is, two things are certain: (1) that to grant professional freedom to the right type of nurse is to stimulate her best endeavour, and (2) that the most carefully-devised restrictions will be evaded by the wrong type.

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