

to produce an inordinate number of colds and coughs, to say nothing of more serious attacks of pneumonia, bronchitis, and the hosts of other ills incident upon a chill, among those of the nurses who were not very strong.

How many of them would remember to change their shoes after such a walk, or would have time to do so, with the fear of a reprimand for being late before them? Draggled dress skirts, muddy footmarks would besmirch the ward floors, and surgical cleanliness would be more difficult of attainment than ever.

I think, too, that every Matron, who is a true mother at heart, likes to have her nurses around her within easy access, by night and by day; and in case of sudden illness she does not care to have the sick one conveyed through the streets in the hospital ambulance to the Home, or to allow her to walk the necessary distance in any way unfit. She wishes to be able to visit her frequently during the day if ill, and to supervise her nursing rather than to relegate it altogether to other hands, as she would have to do if the Home were some distance from the hospital.

If the Matron's own private quarters are within the hospital grounds, then she loses touch with, and cannot be responsible for, her nurses in their distant Home; and if she herself resides with them, then she would perforce be absent from the hospital a good many hours out of the twenty-four. A divided authority and responsibility would necessarily be established, subversive to all good discipline, and productive of countless opportunities for disorder and discord.

Nurses, whose presence should carry an air of calm and restful repose with them, are more likely to fluster and worry their patients than to soothe them if they begin their work by an irritating hurry and a breathless chase after the lost ten minutes they spent in bed.

They reach the scene of their daily work disquieted and unfit, by reason of a hasty toilet, and still hastier breakfast, to fulfil their duties properly. They are tired, and presently hungry. They are reproved for untidiness, for being late perhaps, and are sharply told they should get up earlier.

The home atmosphere of the hospital, so important to the well-being of the patients and to the character of the nurses, is destroyed. The wards become "places of business" where the employees come to work, as they would at an office or a factory, their centres of interest and ideals of home being quite elsewhere.

This may be an extreme view of the plan, but I think not an improbable one, though the chief objection to it, if one seeks to really influence a committee on the subject, is the very practical point that the arrangement must certainly entail a good deal of extra expense in its working.

Personally, as a Matron, I like to have my nurses sufficiently near me by night and by day to be easily reached at all times, and to be part and parcel of the life and working of the hospital. In no other way can our interests be identical, our comfort assured, and the home-like aspect of our daily life so well maintained in order and good discipline.

I am, dear Madam, yours faithfully,

E. MARGARET FOX, Matron.

Tottenham Hospital, London, N.

## Nursing Echoes.

\* \* \* *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



The Red Cross Society of Switzerland has awarded a prize to an inhabitant of Geneva for his invention of a light belt, which contains ten pockets and can carry a complete set of medical stores, instruments, and bandages. It is intended for soldiers and mountaineers.

Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome have decided to hold a Nursing Exhibition in connection with the Historical Exhibition they are organising in connection with medicine, chemistry, pharmacy, and the allied sciences. We look forward with pleasure to this exhibition, as everything organised by this firm is always well and thoroughly carried out.

The endeavour to come to some arrangement in regard to the carrying out of the Midwives' Act in rural districts was the occasion of a conference last week at 3, Grosvenor Place, under the chairmanship of Lord Belper, convened by the Rural Midwives' Association. It was attended by representatives of County Councils and by medical practitioners from various parts of the country. The resolutions adopted were:—

(a) That the requirements of the Midwives Act may be usefully met by adding midwives to the staff of the local nursing associations, and by training local women to work under a small committee, provided that in both cases their work is kept distinct from cases dangerous to their calling.

(b) That where localities are unable to meet the initial expense of training, recourse must be had to grants from county councils and others, but some payment by the patient should always be made to meet the current expenses.

(c) That respectable women of the cottage class, carefully trained, and working under supervision, will meet the requirements of the Act in rural districts.

(d) That the supervision of a local committee is advisable in every case, who should be in communication with the local supervising authorities under the Act.

Mrs. Heywood Johnstone, chairman of the Executive Committee of the above Association, supported the resolutions. She thought cottage women

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