

I have still a grateful recollection of much kindly help from Night Sisters, who certainly much preferred being regarded as "utility persons" rather than as merely "walking on ladies." But the strict disciplinarian in charge of the ward apparently ignored the aid at hand. She does not pleasantly commend and encourage the pro., who has done her best. We read "*She did not grumble.*" A volume is embodied in that brief sentence. When she does speak is it a sympathetic remark about the patient and his condition, or that wee bit of friendly appreciation which is so valued by and so helpful to a beginner? No. No. Only this put shortly, "You did your dressing all right, but I should have thought much more of you if you had dusted the kitchen properly." The magnitude of this latter offence was such that the reprimand was given within the sacred precincts of the Sister's room, from which the pro. emerged weeping. I also exclaim Alas! that there should have been this solemn farce, resulting in the tragedy and tears, about a minor kitchen detail, which surely came under wardmaids' work.

The austere (I use "Keltic's" phrase), unsympathetic Sister exists, but, happily, is rare. She is somewhat of a *misfit* in a hospital ward, where kindness and forbearance ought to go hand in hand with discipline. To the rest of the great and noble army of Sisters I say, heartily, with Hilary Jesson, "God bless 'em."

35, Brook Street, W.

E. SPENCER.

A CURIOUS ANTIPATHY.

To the Editor of the "*British Journal of Nursing.*"

DEAR MADAM,—I notice that in her interesting article on "A Nurse's Life in South Africa" Miss Kenealy draws attention to the fact that some nurses "invariably turn sick at the smell of the natives, and never overcome their repugnance to touching them." Concerning the smell I cannot speak, for I have only worked in a country where clean natives at any rate have no perceptible smell, but as to the other fact I certainly can testify to it. As I have not got this repugnance, it seems to me most curious, but I have known it strongly marked in many people who in the abstract are full of good will and excellent sentiments to native races. This trait in certain white people is excellently depicted by Mrs. Beecher Stowe in Uncle Tom's Cabin in connection with the characters of Miss Ophelia and Topsy. Topsy recognised Miss Ophelia's repugnance quickly enough, and so does the native to-day. In my opinion nurses and mission workers who have it, had better not attempt to work amongst natives. They may do their duty by them in spite of their repugnance, but they will never get any hold over them. Some people have an antipathy to cats, curious but real. They had better avoid them.

One reason why some natives are supposed to emit a smell peculiar to their race is because they love to oil themselves. And certainly a clean black skin anointed with oil is in prime condition, fine in texture, smooth as satin, and shining like ebony. But his taste in oil is weird sometimes.

Yours faithfully,

A LOVER OF AFRICAN RACES.

Comments and Replies.

District Nurse.—It is not desirable that either nurses or other persons merely present at a birth or death should offer themselves as informants in the place of those upon whom the duty by law devolves. The National Record is required to be attested by the signature of one of the parents in the case of a birth, and by the signature of a relative of the deceased in the case of a death. Except, therefore, under exceptional circumstances the attendance of any other person at the Registrar's office is entirely unnecessary.

A Would-be Nurse.—At a few hospitals candidates are required to pass a simple entrance examination before being accepted on probation. At St. Bartholomew's Hospital, for instance, they must satisfy the Medical and Surgical Instructors that they have received a fair education and are generally intelligent, also that they have an elementary knowledge of the skeleton, the general situation of the viscera, of the course of the circulation of the blood, the composition of air, the structure and use of thermometers, and the signs and terms commonly used in prescriptions. There is, however, no standard of general education laid down as to be required of probationers in all hospitals, this could only be done by a Central Governing Body. Nevertheless to pass satisfactorily through a course of training as a nurse in these days a fair general education is necessary.

Notices.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

All those desirous of helping on the important movement of this Society to obtain a Bill providing for the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses will find an application form on advt. page iv., or can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

Those nurses who are working on behalf of the above Society, and are endeavouring to spread knowledge as to its aims, may be glad to know that they can now obtain a Memorandum, giving briefly the reasons why Registration is necessary, from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. Price 6d. for 20 copies.

Those interested in the efficient organisation of nursing should procure the Annual Report of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses from the Hon. Secretary. Six copies, post free, 7d., or one copy 1½d. It gives a brief review of the history of State Registration.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

The Editor will at all times be pleased to consider articles of a suitable nature for insertion in this Journal—those on practical nursing are specially invited. The Editor will also be pleased to receive paragraphs, such as items of nursing news, results of nurses' examinations, new appointments, reports of hospital functions, also letters on questions of interest to nurses, and newspapers marked with reports of matters of professional interest.

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

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page viii.

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