

Frankly, we consider Mr. Harben, L.C.C., Chairman of the Central Hospital Council, owes an explanation to the public for his Council, which is composed of hospital chairmen and members of the medical staff, taking power to use charitable money in their political fight with trained nurses on the registration question. Personally, we consider it an entirely unwarrantable use of charitable money, and if he has not already taken steps to stop this money being so applied the sooner he does so the better. The nurses are not quite so lamb-like as they were thirteen years ago, and they mean to do so.—ED.]

THE TRAGEDY AND COMEDY OF WAR HOSPITALS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I have no desire to enter into the field of controversy, or take sides for or against the old Army Nursing Service System, but I confess to a love for fair play, and one or two points in the letter "Sister X" has done me the honour to write to me in your issue of December 15th, seems to me to require some comment.

Your correspondent appears to base many of her scathing and most unjust reflections on "Army System"! from the reports given to her by the individual members of the corps with whom she chanced to be working. I can well imagine the joy of those same individuals at finding a sister so credulous! I should like to illustrate my point by alluding to a small incident which occurred in my own ward two days since. An orderly in charge of the ward was reproved by a Sister for having each and every window and ventilator closely shut up. His reply was ready: "Sister, the medical officer's orders are that the temperature of this ward is to be kept up this cold weather." Needless to say, I did not insult my medical officer by enquiring whether he intended his orders to be carried out thus literally, but those who judge "Army System" by Sister X's methods, will always find material ready to their hand. My inference is obvious.

Anyone who has had any experience of the soldier knows that he must, indeed, be hard put to it before he fails to find an excuse for his mistakes—*any* excuse is better than none.

No one, however, but a pure novice would form their ideas of a system from the assertions of an orderly except *cum grano salis*.

"The milk question" has been worn threadbare, or I might add that it requires no exceptional amount of intelligence to know that milk keeps better on being boiled; I never heard of any hospital abroad where this was not the rule, but it stands to reason that milk, to stand boiling, must be fresh when brought to hospital—hence the constant difficulty. With regard to "Sister X's" statements as to washing of patients it will be sufficient for me to quote para. 149 Regulations for Army Medical Service, 1900, this being the period under discussion, and *prior* to the advent of the new Service. It reads as follows: "They, *i.e.*, the Sisters, will be responsible for the personal cleanliness of the patients in their wards, that all medicines, diets, and extras are

supplied to the patients according to the instructions of the prescribing Medical Officer and that no supplies of any kind are introduced into the wards without his authority." Further comment is needless. "Sister X" has obviously been most unfortunate in her experiences.

Looking back after some nine years of work in various Military Hospitals (instead of how many months?) I can honestly say, I should not fear the testimony of patients nursed in any of them, not even of the sick Sisters, and I was at one time responsible for them as well as for the Tommies. I don't think any of them would deny that they were treated as well as was possible under difficulties, and (wonderful to relate) they *were* occasionally washed!

Trusting you will forgive me for trespassing once more, and finally, upon your valuable space,—I am, Dear Madam, faithfully yours, X. Y. Z.

Three Prize Competitions.

The Editor offers the following prizes:—

No. 1. PRACTICAL NURSING ARTICLE.

A prize of £5 5s. for the best article on a Practical Nursing Subject, containing 1,500 to 1,600 words, with illustrations, of which photographs or drawings must be enclosed. Papers competing for this prize must be received by the Editor not later than Saturday, December 29th, 1906. The article gaining the prize and the name or pseudonym of the prize-winner will appear early in the New Year.

No. 2. PUZZLE COMPETITION.

Details will be found on page viii.

No. 3. A PARAGRAPH OF PRACTICAL NURSING INTEREST.

A prize of 10s. for the best paragraph, on a postcard, of practical nursing interest. See our weekly "Practical Points" column. Postcards competing for this prize must reach the Editor not later than Saturday, Jan. 5th, 1907. The paragraph gaining the prize, and the name or pseudonym of the prize-winner will be published on Saturday, Jan. 12th.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING COMPETITIONS

1 AND 3.

Each competitor for No 1 Prize must enclose with his or her article or paragraph a sealed envelope, outside which is written the title of the contents only, and inside the title of the contents with the author's full name and address. The covering envelope in the case of Competition 1, and the postcard in Competition 3, should bear the words "Prize Competition."

The Editor reserves to herself the right to publish any of the articles or paragraphs received for the competition. In such event payment will be made at the current rate; such article or paragraph to become the property and copyright of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

All competitions must be addressed to the Editor, at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.

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