

## OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

## DIFFICULTIES OF PRIVATE NURSING IN INDIA.

DEAR EDITOR,—I often see interesting articles in your paper from nurses abroad; perhaps these few lines I send, you will find interesting enough to insert in your valuable paper.

I was called to nurse a case of supposed enteric, a Parsee boy aged about eighteen years. The doctor was a Parsee with a degree. He came in the morning in the usual way and gave orders. The doctor had gone. I went to the patient and asked him if he would like to be washed. This about 9 a.m. He absolutely refused, saying, "Father said no," it was too cold, the temperature then registering 80 deg., and it should be done about 11.30 a.m.

The room he was in was a large airy one with five doors, and five ventilators with a verandah around. If a slight breeze sprang up every door was shut because Father said "he might get a chill." A few minutes after these had to be opened again as Father said it was too warm and he must have plenty of air. Needless to say the ventilators had also to be closed and had to be re-opened with a long bamboo and this continued nearly every hour during the day.

Not the doctor's orders were carried out but what his "Father" liked. Everything he was asked to do was done at the hour "Father" desired.

The order of the doctor was:—"If temperature over 100 deg. to be sponged. Father said "No," if temperature over 101 deg. then sponge. (I may mention here that "Father" was a very rich merchant and not a doctor.) Doctor said give an enema at 6 p.m. but "Father" said "No" 7 p.m. would do.

If patient was asleep his mother would enter the room, go up to the bed and lift his arm to see if he were really asleep and of course woke him. She would then say "How could you say he was asleep?"

Nourishment of milk and barley water ordered to be given but Father said "No" barley water was constipating so soda water must be used instead. No nourishment was allowed by Father after 11 p.m.

Quinine pills grs. ii ordered every morning by the doctor. Father said "No" he must not have it, it makes him deaf. Ice bag ordered to head. Approved by Father and so continued night and day. Nothing but a hatchet to break the ice with. Bag to be filled every twenty minutes. Hours of duty 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. No rest except fifteen minutes for lunch and tea.

Father used to go to his office for a few hours a day and as soon as the family could hear his motor returning, one of them would run into the sick room to see that everything was all right, especially that the ice-bag was full.

His mother who was suffering from elephantia-

sis would sit on his bed with her legs stretched out. When asked why she was doing this she would answer "That she was trying to warm him, as she thought he was looking cold.

This is only one instance of many similar cases where the doctor's word is not considered. He is called in just for appearance sake.

Patient made a good recovery and has now gone up to the hills for a change of air. I must mention before I close up that the nurses were treated well and were sent to and from their case in a carriage.

Yours truly,

CAROLINE SAUNDERS.

Bombay.

## DISPENSING.

It is only within comparatively recent years that dispensing medicine for Medical Men, Dispensaries, and Hospitals has been taken up by women.

To-day it is fully recognised that they are eminently fitted for the work. The list of public institutions where they are employed is too long to quote here, and in all of them they are doing excellent work.

Unlike women's work in general, it is well paid. The hours are reasonable and the conditions are good.

As in other professions, the necessary qualification is obtained by examination. The examination is that of the Society of Apothecaries, the certificate being recognised by the Local Government Board, Hospitals, Dispensaries, and by the Medical Profession.

The examination consists of two parts, Practical and Oral. The candidate must be nineteen years of age and must produce a certificate that she has done six months' practical work.

For over twelve years "The Westminster Classes" have specialised in this training under the direction of Mr. Carson, and old students are to be found all over the United Kingdom, and as far afield as China and Corea. Within the last month three students of the Westminster Classes have secured posts worth respectively £100, £90 and £80 a year.

Further particulars can be obtained from the Secretary, "The Westminster Classes," Queen Anne's Chambers, Broadway and Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W.

## A DISGRACE TO CIVILIZATION,

At the Middlesex Sessions on Saturday the Court passed a resolution—a few Justices dissenting—expressing the opinion that the infliction of corporal punishment would act as a deterrent in cases of assaults on children.

This is just the one crime for which we would hang the vile wretches who commit it.

In cases where the victims are unable to protect themselves, as in instances of the above nature, it is the duty of the State to safeguard the helpless, and sentences should be exemplary.

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