

to the preservation and prolongation of many valuable lives; and the establishment and maintenance of such an institution would be a work of genuine philanthropy. In such a direction as this, as the Princess correctly states, Nurses can do but little to help themselves. Until now there has been no bond of union between them. As a rule, they are very indifferently paid, partly because they are much under the dominion of some variety of middleman, by whom a large proportion of their actual earnings is diverted from them. The calls upon them, moreover, are numerous and heavy. The most experienced Matrons and Superintendents fully recognise that, in a hospital, a Nurse cannot preserve her health without recreation, and recreation costs money. Her clothing is much more costly than that of a domestic servant who would receive almost the same wages; and the primary duty of perfect cleanliness is one which cannot be fulfilled without expense. In one, at least, of the London hospitals, while the perfectly clean dress, and the spotless apron, collar, and cuffs are required no less strictly than elsewhere, the Nurses, out of a very small stipend, are compelled to pay for their own washing. In many cases, too, there are the demands of home, the invalid mother to be provided with additional comforts, or the young brother to be helped forward in life. It is on such grounds as these that the public may fairly be asked to contribute to institutions from which, in the long run, they would themselves derive no small advantage.

"It would also be well within the province of the Association, as soon as more pressing matters have been attended to, to improve the organisation through which, at present, Nurses and patients are brought into contact with one another. A large number of Nurses live in collective homes, variously designated, and maintained sometimes by a hospital, sometimes by a private speculator. These Nurses receive a regular annual stipend, according to their agreement with the proprietor, sometimes with, sometimes without, a percentage on their earnings. When not employed they are maintained in the home; and it follows, on commercial principles, that proprietors are under some temptation to engage Nurses who can be had cheaply, and also to send them out without any very close scrutiny as to their fitness for the class of case for which they are required. There is no doubt that both these temptations are constantly resisted in a highly creditable manner, but they nevertheless exist, and, with increasing demand and increasing competition, they will be more and more likely to influence conduct. It frequently happens, moreover, that all the Nurses attached to a particular home are engaged, and that the time occupied in inquiring there, is wasted. Many Nurses, again, live in private lodgings, trusting to medical men for employment; and with these, of course, there is a still greater risk of losing

precious time by sending for them when they cannot be obtained. Surely it would not be impossible to organise, at no great cost, a central office—one which might be in telephonic or telegraphic communication with various homes or individuals, and through which the trouble now often experienced in finding a suitable Nurse might be saved. Such an office, there can be no doubt, would tend towards the gradual abolition of the proprietors, whether hospitals or individuals, by whom Nurses are now farmed out, and would by so much increase the amount of money which would be received by the Nurses themselves. In this and in many other ways the Association might serve as a pioneer in the organisation of female industry, and might furnish an example to women engaged in other occupations of the advantages which they would derive from union. It is very fitting that such an example should be set by the members of a calling which requires the constant exercise of many admirable qualities of body and mind, which has taken no small share in producing the diminution of disease and mortality which has been so conspicuous during the reign of the Queen, and the kindly interest in which, so warmly displayed by the Princess Christian, is but a repetition of that which has been evinced on many occasions by Her Majesty herself. We gladly gave publicity to Her Royal Highness's appeal, and we trust that the responses which it will call forth may be equal to the expectations of the Association."

ON THE RELATIVE POSITIONS OF HOSPITAL SISTER, STAFF NURSE, AND PROBATIONER, AND WHAT THEIR HOURS OF DUTY AND WORK SHOULD SEVERALLY BE.

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THE broad principles respecting the relative positions of Hospital Sister, Staff Nurse, and Probationer, are much the same in all hospitals; but the hours of duty and recreation vary. No dogmatic, unvarying rules about these things can be insisted upon, as being equally suitable for all hospitals. Each hospital has, and must have, its own rules about its Nurses, &c., which meet the requirements of the hospital, the doctors, and all who are connected with it, better than the rules and regulations of any other hospital would. There may sometimes be room for improvement, which improvement doubtless will steadily take place; for now that hospital matters are being brought more and more under the notice of all people, are

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