

five years a "Sister" must remain in India, from all those nearest and dearest at home.

To those just entering and about to proceed to India, this trooping season, some practical hints may be acceptable, with respect to outfit and general arrangements.

The first thought after appointment is, naturally, "outfit." A list of the articles of uniform is given to each accepted candidate, with the name of the firm in town who supplies them—we are told—at contract prices. For the payment of the outfit a sum of £15 is allowed by the Indian Office.

The absence of the correct pattern of the uniform, and, often, the short time between appointment and embarkation, necessitate, in most cases, carrying out the direction issued. Such was my experience. The result—a badly-fitting uniform, which, on arrival in India, had to be altered. Further, the price charged, to my mind, was excessive.

Two warm dresses and six white ones is the number given in the list of requirements. The latter are insufficient in a very hot station. I would suggest, as a less expensive method, ordering from this firm only one of each article. Most ladies, I think, would go out in "Mufti" and, on arrival, if they took grey and red material with them, would find one warm dress sufficient until the others could be made. The material for the white dresses could either be purchased at any shop in town at a reasonable price, or in India, equally cheap. A tailor can always be hired in India at a very small sum. With supervision, they work well, and in the making of washing dresses effect a considerable saving.

I believe this would be more satisfactory to the Lady Superintendents as well as the Nursing Sisters, as there are frequently incorrect details in the uniform, which have to be altered. It is essential all should be alike, and the Sisters should be glad to consult their Superintendents and benefit by their advice.

Sailor hats, white and grey ones, are admissible, although not given in the list. These it would be well to take out, as nice ones are difficult to obtain, and much more expensive than in England.

Quarters are provided for the Sisters by Government, with the usual allowance of Government furniture, sufficient, but not luxurious. The drawing-room is mostly furnished by the Sisters, and pictures and nick-knacks of the usual kind are found very acceptable and decidedly worth taking, if not of very heavy weight. It is well, however, to remember in packing, that baggage is expensive on Indian railways. Sisters are liable to be moved about, and the allowance of luggage travelling on warrant in India is nothing like as generous as that allowed on going out and returning home.

Travelling rugs, a couple of pillows, a rezai,

which is a warm quilted cotton rug, which may be purchased on arrival in Bombay for about four rupees, will be needed as bedding; Government only supplying the bedstead and mattress. These will also be required in travelling. An ordinary macintosh travelling rug will be found best to wrap them in, and it can afterwards be utilised as a carriage macintosh. During my time (I speak only of Bangalore, the station I worked in), the custom was for each lady to provide her own bed and table linen, share of table silver, cutlery, glass and crockery, and to subscribe a sum for the use, wear and tear, and replacement of culinary utensils. This arrangement demanded a considerable outlay on arrival, and to many, from a monetary point of view, was as inconvenient as unexpected.

At the headquarters of the Sisters in the Madras Presidency this has been altered, and many thanks are due to Miss Maxwell Müller, who on taking up her appointment of Lady Superintendent, most generously brought out from England many additions of comfort for the Sisters' Quarters, supplying the mess with linen, silver, cutlery and crockery, and arranging that each Sister quartered there should on arrival contribute a small sum to keep up the supply.

Where the Quarters are not near the Hospital, the Sisters are allowed by Government some means of conveyance to and from their duty. In Bangalore we used a bullock cart, roomy and covered in, drawn by two bullocks, and driven by a native. The bullocks are strong animals and generally make four double journeys daily of a mile-and-three-quarters each way.

Distances are great, even from one end of a station to the other. The heat is likewise great, and very little walking in comparison with England can be done. It is necessary as a means of getting about quickly in a given time to have a pony and cart. This can be got more cheaply by waiting a while until someone leaves the station and is eager to sell. Ponies run from rupees 250 to five or six hundred. A country cart can be got very reasonably, but those built by Simpson are always of the best and re-sell well. They range in price from rupees 400 upwards.

Any lady who has been accustomed to riding in England would find that exercise a source of great pleasure in off duty time in India, and very healthful. A saddle and a habit would be in that case a useful and wise addition to the outfit.

The pay of a Nursing Sister is good, especially at the present low rate of the rupee, because those spending their money in the country gain by "Compensation" allowance. It is sufficient to just live on comfortably, keep oneself neatly clothed, and allow oneself the pleasure of keeping a horse and trap, which latter costs roughly about rupees 30 a month. Different stations in India have dif-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)