

Home Hospitals.

IN concluding our remarks about Home Hospitals, one might perhaps, with benefit, allude to the financial side of the question. We hear on all sides the opinion expressed that the charges for admission into the Home Hospitals are very high, and doubtless for the advantages given in some of these Institutions, the opinion is correct; on the other hand, in comparison with the attention received in an Hotel, the well regulated Homes are very much less expensive. But in all these discussions the fees necessary for professional Nursing are omitted, and there lies the crux of the question. The ill-regulated Homes, under untrained supervision, often charge higher fees than those in which the patient gets what he is charged for—*trained Nursing*—and patients would be wise to insist upon receiving their *quid pro quo*. To charge seven or eight guineas a week for one bedroom without skilled Nursing—the patient paying the hired-in Nurse her fee—is preposterous. Where trained supervision, and an ample day and night staff of Nurses is provided, seven guineas a week is a very reasonable charge, and is about one-third what is paid in a first-class hotel. Major operations, which require two special Nurses, do not pay unless from £10 10s. to £12 12s. a week is charged. We are of opinion that medical men who send their patients into Home Hospitals, owe it to themselves and to their patients to make themselves fully acquainted with the management of the Institution—how many Nurses and servants per bed are provided both for day and night duty. The number should not be less than one and a half persons, inclusive of Superintendent, per patient, if the work is to be done in the most efficient manner. The system of one night Nurse to eight beds and upwards necessarily means that the patients must be neglected. The night Nurse should not be responsible for more than four patients, and the rooms should be situated, if possible, on the same floor.

We have had experience of every branch of Institution Nursing, and we say unhesitatingly, that by far the most arduous work for a Sister or Superintendent is to be found in a Home Hospital. The Nurses' work, also, is often very trying—all calling for unlimited patience, tact, and devotion. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and such expert work should be paid at a high rate; and as it would not be possible for a woman to continue to superintend a Home Hospital *efficiently* for a great number of years, the charges should be such as will bring her in a good return, and enable her to save for her future needs. It is false and wrong to estimate women's skilled professional work as if it were of no value to the body politic, and when we hear a surgeon remark: "Oh! I can get my patients nursed for £2 2s. a week," we must be forgiven for receiving this statement with a certain amount of credulity, and also for pitying both Nurse and patient. One word of congratulation. In no branch of Nursing (and they are all levelling up to a very high standard of efficiency) have greater improvements taken place, within the last decade, than in the *ménage* and *clientèle* of our Home Hospitals. We remember them in the past! To-day there are in London numbers of charming houses, fitted with every comfort for the reception of the better class patient, and superintended by highly skilled Nurses. And no doubt, in another decade, we shall have seen this fundamental principle adopted and insisted upon by all medical men.

Nursing Echoes.

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



THE QUEEN has been sending her usual kind gifts of cast linen for the use of several of the London Hospitals. It is proverbial that "one should not look a gift-horse in the mouth," but, in the interests of the Hospitals, it is a matter of regret that so much of this beautiful, soft linen, which would otherwise be of infinite value in padding splints, &c., is cut through with a stamp which divides it into such small pieces as often to make them quite valueless for surgical purposes. It seems such a pity that a hint cannot be conveyed to the officials whose duty it is to send out the linen, that the division be made into larger sections.

ON December 19th the students of the Women's School of Medicine gave their Christmas Theatrical Entertainment to the patients and Nurses of the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road. One of the wards had been cleared and fitted for the occasion, and a delightful evening was passed. The main items on the programme were a one-act play by Jerome K. Jerome, entitled "Sunset," and "The Dress Rehearsal."

THE annual Christmas Amateur Entertainment at St. Mary's Hospital, which again this year will consist of amateur dramatic performances by the resident medical officers, will take place in the Board Room of the Hospital on Monday and Tuesday, January 6th and 7th; on the 6th for the patients, and on the 7th for the Nurses and their friends. The number of tickets will necessarily be strictly limited.

The Christmas tree Entertainment in De Hirsch Ward will take place on Friday, January 3rd; in Crawshay ward, on Tuesday, December 31st. Contributions of toys and other articles will be greatly valued by the Sisters in charge of the children's wards.

The sale of work in aid of the funds of St. Mary's Hospital, which was held in the Board Room on the 4th inst., realised about £100.

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