

It was then I found my Staff Nurse
A patient friend and kind,
As she helped me with a smiling—
"You'll get quicker—never mind."

And I can but acknowledge it,
She was quite right, I know,
When she told me rather shortly,
To remember I was "Pro";

Not to interview the Doctor,
Not to be too proud to learn;
To remember I must one day
Be a "Staff Nurse" in my turn.

She would tell me, in conclusion,
That she hoped I would not mind
Being lectured on such matters,
She had thought it only kind.

I could fill books with memories
Of my first year as "Pro,"
But these will prove 'tis gratitude
And not revenge I owe.

—ANOTHER PROBATIONER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Yes, certainly the majority of "Staffs" are given to snubbing, and I am very pleased to observe that the question has come up in the RECORD, as a little ventilation of the subject may result in good. I entered a London Training School some two years ago, and often now think with a shudder of the real misery I endured during my first few months' work in the wards. I began my work full of hope, and wishful to learn, being quite prepared for hard work, and was then, as I am now, young, strong, and a woman of average ability. I came from a good middle-class home, and knew something of house work, and until I entered a Hospital ward never suspected that consignment to Earlswood should have been my natural sphere.

I remember entering the ward at 7 a.m., and appealing to a staff Nurse on duty for instructions as to what I was to do. This little person, who was flying round with wash hand basins, simply ignored my question, and it was from a patient that I learnt she was the "night Nurse," and was directed to apply to another Nurse in the same uniform who was "day staff." I repeated my question. This Nurse answered me without turning her head, "If you don't know your work sit on the coal box; we've no time for teaching new Pros. in this ward."

"Perhaps I have come to the wrong ward," I ventured guilelessly.

"New Pros. are always in the wrong ward," she snapped back again, this time flinging the bed-clothes over the end of the bed on to the floor, and enveloping me in their somewhat grimy folds. I disentangled myself, and seated myself on the coal box. Here I remained, great hot tears running down my nose and splashing on to my clean apron, not daring to mop them up by using my handkerchief.

Presently a fellow Probationer spied me, and hurrying past said, "Come and help me fill the ice bags; it's appropriate work in your dissolving condition."

I sprang up and followed her, and willingly performed a variety of duties which usually fell to her

share, and which, apparently, she did not particularly appreciate.

My first morning was a specimen of many days which followed. I entered the Hospital to learn. I was expected to know my work without being taught. The majority of Staffs, apparently, considered it a personal insult if one asked a question, and that it was their bounden duty to publicly expose one's ignorance upon all occasions.

The injustice of the system enraged me. Of course after the first few months one got somewhat hardened, but I believe few Matrons know how acutely sensitive women suffer by the present lack of a practical system of teaching in the wards. It appears to me, after reading the RECORD, that the only remedy for this well-known evil lies in a thorough preliminary course of practical teaching for women before they enter the wards as Probationers.

There is so much routine ward work to be got through in the early hours of the day, that time for practical instruction upon the part of the "Staffs" is very difficult, and many of them are quite unaware how injurious the "snubbing system" is to the character of the majority of girls who suffer from it—it warps, weakens, or hardens the large majority of our future Nurses.

Yours,

A CONSTANT READER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read the "Ode to a Staff Nurse," in the last NURSING RECORD, with some interest, and feel sure that it puts into words the feelings of many Probationers. Why is it that the new-comers in a Hospital are so often snubbed by their seniors? One is almost driven to think that Staff Nurses have forgotten their own probationary days, when they too, first launched into the Nursing world, were bewildered by the novelty of fresh surroundings, often did stupid things from sheer ignorance, were weary, disillusioned, disheartened, and longed sometimes for an appreciative word which was left unsaid, although in reality the "Staffs" might be well pleased with their new subordinates. That Staff Nurses have not forgotten these days entirely, however, one knows, because from time to time one hears them say that it is "good for Probationers to be well sat upon and taken down in their early days." "I was well snubbed myself," says a Nurse now possessed of her certificate, "and very good it was for me." Perhaps, oh most sapient of Staff Nurses; but, if so, it may be just possible that the process in your instance was good for you, and that you were, moreover, possessed of a more pachydermatous exterior, than the shy, diffident, sensitive Probationer to whom the snubbing process, as administered by you to-day, is keen torture. It is quite possible to insist upon work being well and thoroughly done (and, in most instances, the Probationer is anxious so to do it), without resorting to such methods. In many instances I think this habit of "snubbing the Probationer" is only the effort after self-glorification of a vulgar nature, using the power entrusted to it for other purposes in an unjustifiable way. I do not, for a moment, wish to say that all Staff Nurses act in this way, or that all Probationers are perfect—far from it; but experience leads me to suppose that the state of things described in the "Ode" is not uncommon. I

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