

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* * All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.



WE have the pleasure to acknowledge with much gratitude annual subscriptions of one guinea from Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild and Mrs. Henry Willett, for the Nurses' Home of Rest at Brighton.

IT must have been with a certain amused sense of satisfaction that the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Friday last quoted statistics from the *Hospital*, in a paragraph headed "Long Hours of Nurses—'All Work and No Play,'" by which its own well-known indictment against the Nursing Department of the London Hospital is, after three years, largely corroborated by a partisan of that Institution.

It will be remembered that, whenever the nursing arrangements at the London Hospital have been publicly discussed, Mr. H. C. Burdett, through his organ, and as a Governor of the Institution, has assumed a hotly partisan attitude in support of every detail of its management. We are, therefore, amused to observe in an article published in last week's *Hospital*, entitled "Nurses in 1896: Their Quarters, Hours, and Food," that for once a perfectly temperate and just report of the Nursing arrangements at this valuable Institution has been given—praise has been expressed where it is due (we ourselves congratulated the Committee in our last week's issue on the progressive steps which they were adopting in the education of their Nurses); but attention has been called to several long standing faults of management to which we have alluded in the past:—

(1) The long hours on duty. Day Nurses: From 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., with two hours off duty daily—practically a twelve hours' day. Night Nurses: From 9.20 p.m. to 9.20 a.m.—a twelve hours' night. "These, we are told, are called at 8.15 in winter and 6 p.m. in summer; they are on duty, as stated, from

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Grown in our own British Colony of Ceylon.

9.20 p.m. to 9.20 a.m., being off duty from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in winter, and from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. in summer, having to be in bed by 1.30 p.m. and 11 a.m. respectively. They are, therefore, only in bed for six and three-quarter hours in winter and seven in summer."

(2) The report says:—"The advantage of a 'day off' is very much diminished where, as at the London, Nurses have to come on duty in the morning. Undoubtedly the Nurse ought not only not to come on duty at all, even for an hour, but she also should not be expected to appear at the 6.30 breakfast, in order that extra time in bed may fit her for getting the best possible result from her hard-earned holiday." The truth is that, after three hours' hard work, the Nurse is tired out before she starts on her day's holiday.

(3) Probationers are only given three weeks holiday at the Hospital's *expense* during their whole term of two years' training—one week after each six months' service. The much-vaunted "full month's holiday at the end of their two years' training before entering upon their third year's service on the permanent staff" is, we are informed, *taken at their own expense*, their names not being placed upon the staff Nurses' pay-sheet until after their return.

(4) The system of serving out rations for the Nurses' tea of tea, sugar, butter, and bread, which the Nurses carry about in little tins from the Home to the ward, and *vice versa*, is, the report says, "a bad custom, leading to the food being kept in cupboards in the wards, exposed to all the contamination of Hospital atmosphere, and prepared in a scrambling and altogether unfitting way."

The report omits to mention the conditions under which Private Nursing is organised from the London Hospital; whether or no Probationers are still sent out to nurse in private families at the discretion of the Matron *during their term of two years' training*, or whether the Committee have at last realised that this system is absolutely indefensible from all points of view.

Nor are we informed if an equally indefensible system is still in force; if the funds earned by the Private Nursing Staff are still utilised for paying for the washing of the Hospital Nursing Staff, or, in other words, absorbed by the Hospital. The new Nursing Home at the London Hospital is to be opened at an early date; it should be the proud privilege of the

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