

IF Nurses are to be, with impunity to their accusers, charged with theft by patients suffering from delusions, and clearly not responsible for their actions, a Defence Union for Nurses will certainly have to be established. At Stourbridge a Nurse was charged with having stolen two diamond rings and other property. Her accuser was a lady against whom divorce proceedings had been instituted, the Nurse had prevented her from having a revolver when "she was not quite master of herself," and she was proved to have a pleasant habit of "barricading" the front door against attack, &c., &c. The charge was dismissed, but it is a terrible experience for the Nurse, and there should really be some redress in these cases.

NURSING matters are constantly coming up before the Kingston Board of Guardians. Recently the Master asked for instructions whether when the Nurses were "off duty"—and yet on the premises—they could be called upon to go to the wards if he thought it necessary. He appeared to think that Nurses could only escape from duty by remaining out-of-doors, not allowing for wind, rain, and storms! No one could give him any information, and the matter was referred to the Nursing Committee to deal with. It seems to us to be very clear. If a Nurse is "off duty" she cannot be *called upon* to do duty in the wards. But, as a point of Nursing ethics, she should in case of serious emergency, be ready to act. But this strain on her good nature should never be used unless in case of very real urgency, and the work ought to be so organised that when off duty her place should be filled by another Nurse.

A PROPOSAL to establish a Private Nursing Institution in connection with the Dorchester County Hospital, and to maintain a staff of private Nurses, is meeting with the opposition it deserves. Mr. Lush, in an excellent letter, sets forth his views against the scheme, and hits on two or three very salient points when he says:—"For many years I have maintained that our County Hospital, with its 52 beds (an average of 34 in-patients last year, many of whom were either chronic or comparatively trivial cases), is not large enough for the training of Nurses. In my opinion a Hospital for this purpose should have at least 100 beds. I am constantly deprecating Nurses going for a short time to a Hospital and then assuming a uniform (oftentimes of their own devising), and calling themselves 'trained Nurses.' I have before me the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, and they are of opinion that the *minimum* period after which a Nurse can be advertised as thoroughly trained is three years.

I am pleased to say that Lady Baker's views are the same as my own, and that she acts in accordance with them. She writes to me: 'They (the Nurses) must be **AT**, trained in large Hospitals, if for first-class private work, as ours are—not only a year at the Dorchester Hospital with only 34 beds—that won't constitute "first-class private" any more than "maternity" or "infectious" Nurses in the professional eye. Some of ours have had four or five years' Hospital training in London and other large Infirmaries (over 100 beds), and were Charge Nurses themselves.'

There are so many mills continually grinding out quack Nurses that we are glad Mr. Lush has spoken so strongly, and to the point. The following advertisement from the *Church Times* emphasises better than argument how much there is to contend against in the struggle to maintain some standard of Nurse training:—

TRAINING HOME for DISTRICT or PRIVATE NURSES.—Three months' training, fee 13 gns. Certificate given. Work found, with salary, after training if wished, or further training with small salary.—Sister, St. Barnabas' Nurses' Home, 195, Romford Road, Forest Gate, E.

"Certificate given" after three months, is, no doubt, a very tempting bait to those who want advantages with very little trouble. But such certificates are of so little value in the eyes of professional people that the scheme can hardly be long-lived. This system is almost on a par with the famous "Training and certification of Nurses by correspondence" a system which is still in full swing in Chicago.

THE *Weekly Dispatch* has the following instructive article, headed "A Crying Public Scandal":—

"For some time past complaints have been made of over-working the attendants, both male and female, in most of the metropolitan Asylums, and with the view of investigating the facts a *Dispatch* Commissioner has, during the past few days, instituted inquiries which leave no room for doubt that the Attendants at these Institutions are being scandalously overworked. In some cases they are employed fourteen hours a day, night Attendants being required to work eleven hours without a break, and during the daytime only twenty minutes is allowed for dinner, the Attendants being compelled to return to their wards immediately the repast is concluded. The general opinion prevails that much too low an estimate is formed of the Asylum Attendant's duties and responsibilities, and it was pertinently pointed out to the *Dispatch* representative by one of the Matrons that, while Nurses who merely devoted themselves to

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