

kitchen giving orders to the cook, and saying that nothing was to be kept hot for her, but fresh meat and vegetables were to be cooked at a later hour.

Nurses who have only recently left hospital are said to be apt to rigidly adhere to hospital routine in private houses. An instance is given of a nurse who insisted upon washing her patient at an unreasonably early hour, when the patient was just dozing off to sleep after a very restless and sleepless night.

The writer of another paper is of opinion that the way in which a nurse is treated, usually depends entirely upon herself. She draws attention also to the fact that mental trouble is often a serious hindrance to recovery, and that a sympathetic and tactful nurse may often, if she waits for an opportune moment, obtain the confidence of her patient, and perhaps be instrumental in removing the trouble.

The curious conception some of the general public have as to what training does for nurses was touched upon. "Oh, I did not think you would want a bed, as you are a nurse," is the type of remark made by the person who thinks that nurses are trained to do without sleep!

The solitariness of the life of the private nurse, and the lack of congenial companionship, to which she has to accustom herself, was pointed out. The future of the private nurse was also discussed, and the impossibility of her making adequate provision for her old age. It was thought that the existing Pension Fund, owing to the large sums spent in administration, and the high deposit required each year, did not meet the needs of nurses. It was urged that every nurse, who was not possessed of private means, should put by money to insure for herself an independent and comfortable old age.

We are glad to notice that the outcome of Mr. Crooks' motion, at the London County Council, to reduce the hours of work of the asylum attendants under their control, has produced correspondence in the daily press. In the *Daily Graphic*, "One who has done it," states that the hours on duty for attendants in private asylums are fifteen a day, with only half a day off once a week, and one day a month from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Further, occasionally they take turns in sitting up with a patient all night, and have to be on duty the next day also, making a total of thirty-nine hours at a stretch. This correspondent is of opinion that the Commissioners in Lunacy should be able to help them. We doubt if

great reform will take place in this respect until the responsible heads of the nursing departments of our asylums are trained nurses, who themselves know the strain involved in working such long hours.

Another correspondent draws attention to the long hours at the City of London Asylum, Dartford, and says:—"It is a fact that this asylum is kept notoriously undermanned, and in addition certain workmen and servants are included in the regulation number of attendants, with the result that an extra strain is put upon the faculties of those unfortunates who are relegated to attend upon the lunatics exclusively."

Again, in another letter we read:—"At the Essex County Asylum the hours of duty are from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. The attendants get only one day and two hours off, out of every twenty-three days, besides one week's leave annually. In all, the leave amounts to only about twenty-four days in each year, out of which there are but three Sundays, including the one in the annual week."

Surely these statements should receive full investigation, and if the facts be as asserted, reforms should be instituted forthwith.

We are glad to observe that the Local Government Board are upholding a minority of the Tavistock Guardians in their desire to have an assistant nurse, who has received previous training, in their workhouse. A certain number of the Guardians addressed the Local Government Board upon the subject. It appears that at the Board meeting on February 12th, both the doctor (Dr. Snowden Smith) and the present charge nurse stated their views on the subject. The doctor said that it was useless to have as an assistant nurse any person, however willing, who had not received previous training. There was no possibility of her receiving training in the workhouse, because there was no trained nurse to train her. The nurse, Mrs. Coaker, said that Mabel Smith, the assistant nurse, had no knowledge of nursing, and it would be quite impossible to delegate any responsible duties to her. She was very shy, but willing. She might get on in a year or two. Notwithstanding these statements, and some very strong remarks from several Guardians, it was resolved by 16 votes to 10 to appoint Mabel Smith as assistant nurse for another six months. Some of the Guardians, therefore, referred the matter to the Local Government Board, asking it to refuse to sanction the appointment. An answer has now been received from the Local Government Board, saying that "the Board thought it

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