

undertaking the entire management and responsibility of private hospitals, where there are no resident doctors, seems to me a thing that should be put down with a firm hand. Why such places continue to exist is extraordinary, but they must be supported by medical men of standing who have good practices, and indeed I know, that some of our leading surgeons and physicians, recommend their patients to houses where they know the proprietor is absolutely untrained, this is of course the crux of the whole question, and it shows a contempt for trained nursing, which is the saddest part of the matter. Somehow, even with the best intentions, it takes the heart out of a nurse, with years of experience, to see flourishing dozens of these nursing homes, in which nursing in its true sense is the very last thing thought of. In one the nurses sleep in the patients' rooms, and are thus practically on duty night and day; in another there is no night nurse at all, a bell being arranged over the bed of the unfortunate day nurse, who has to attend to patients if they ring in the night; in another one night nurse attends to patients in two houses, her only means of going from one house to the other being through the basement; in another probationers are taken, girls with no hospital experience, and who are worse than useless, here domestic servants serve all the meals, and I have known the housemaid set to sit by a patient after an operation, whilst the one nurse attends to the clanging bells of other inmates; in another house the patients are not permitted to have bells, so that they cannot command attention at will; in the majority of the homes I know, fires are let out at night even in the coldest weather. The food is seldom of the best quality, and for the accommodation the prices are outrageous, ten and sometimes twelve guineas a week being charged for board, lodging, and the sixth part of the attention of a half-trained nurse. All sorts and conditions of nurses are drafted in to attend on critical operations, whose services are dispensed with just as soon as the patients are getting used to their presence, and the primitive preparation of dressings, kept only loosely wrapped in dusty papers, and often cut on dirty tables, is satisfactory only to the germs. Sanitary arrangements are often bad, the bedroom utensils constantly left unemptied for hours, and never scalded, usually wiped out with the same cloth that is used for the basin and bottles, dirty dressings lie about for hours in lavatories unburnt; and, indeed, it is high time for searching enquiries upon the part of the doctors whose patients are sent into these places, so that an end should be put upon the nursing home *à la mode*.

Yours truly,
A PERIPATETIC NURSE.

PRO. v. FAG.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I notice it was stated, by "One Interested," in your correspondence columns, last week, that "as a rule, certificated nurses require another one to wait on them, in and after the performance of their duties." This statement is made by one who has worked in asylums for over thirty years.

Is the indictment a true one? I am inclined to think to some extent it is, and, if so, trained nurses should be grateful to "One Interested," for her plain speaking. The best class of nurses undoubtedly

"clear up after themselves," but, calling to mind my time as a probationer, I have vivid remembrances of having to fetch and carry, and fag generally, for my staff nurse. It is not, I believe, unusual for a staff nurse to think that the "pro." is in the ward to wait upon her, and the "pro.," not knowing, submits to this view.

When her turn comes to be in a responsible position she does not, if she be a conscientious woman, impose an undue share of "menial work" upon her subordinates, and so, in the course of her training, she manages to get a full share herself.

It would be interesting to hear the views of other nurses on this subject.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
CERTIFICATED NURSE.

WAS HE JUSTIFIED?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I should very much like your views with regard to an incident which recently took place in a very well-known Hospital in London. A friend of mine, who is greatly interested in Hospital and Institutions of various kinds, and whose work in connection with them is very well known, recently applied to the Secretary of a Hospital she had just been over for an Annual Report of its work. He said "Are you a subscriber?" My friend answered in the negative. "Then," he said, "I decline to give it to you, unless I am assured for what purpose you require it."

Was he justified; and is there such a rule applying to Hospital Secretaries?

I may add that my friend is a person of excellent social position, and that this was perfectly well known to the Secretary of this Hospital. Also—but this is beside the point—she is on the staff of a leading daily newspaper, and connected in many ways with journalists of high standing, so that if she had not been too broad-minded to resent the impertinence of this official, the circumstance might have been made very disadvantageous to the Hospital in question.

Sincerely yours,
A BELIEVER IN OFFICIAL CIVILITY.

[We regret that some Hospital Secretaries make enemies for the institutions with which they are connected by refusing reports and appearing to fear criticism upon the part of the press. Such policy is a mistake, and inspires journalists with suspicion.—ED.]

Notice.

OWING to the departure of several members of the Registered Nurses' Society for active service in Greece, there are a few vacancies for thoroughly trained nurses on the staff of the Society. A modern certificate of three years' training is necessary.—Apply to the Secretary, Registered Nurses' Society, 269, Regent Street, London, W.

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