

the gross anomaly of pauper help. It is notorious that in many wards, and even in some Infirmaries, the old and infirm inmates have hitherto been employed in nursing the sick and the lying-in. It is needless to say that the patients were neglected, because it is obvious that under such conditions they could not receive proper care and attention. It is equally certain, although not so obvious to the uninitiated, that a more expensive and extravagant system could hardly have been devised. The appliances and dressings, and especially the alcoholic stimulants, intended for the sick, were rarely, if ever, efficiently used; they were undoubtedly wasted in enormous quantities, and in the case of the last named necessities they were most frequently absorbed by the attendant rather than by the patient. It has been conclusively proved, again and again, that the introduction of a trained nurse, although objected to always on the ground of expense, actually proved the means of effecting a remarkable saving of expenditure upon the items referred to. We lay stress upon this fact, as indeed we have previously done in these columns, because we have learnt that this fact appeals very forcibly to Guardians of the Poor. But the alleviation of suffering effected by the efforts of a trained nurse is a point of view which, in our judgment, requires equal consideration—and one which is equally beyond question.

Regulation II. carries the reform a step further and provides that no Nurse, or even Assistant Nurse, shall be, in future, appointed in Infirmaries unless he or she has had "such practical experience in nursing as may render him or her a fit and proper person to hold such office." The definition is, perhaps necessarily, a little vague, but it effectually enforces the principle that, in future, Nurses who obtain Infirmary appointments must have been properly trained. In due time, the Board will, doubtless, be able to extend this regulation by ordering that a Staff Nurse shall have been registered as a trained Nurse, and that an Assistant Nurse shall be a Probationer. Even now this latter is foreshadowed, for it is provided that where the Superintendent is a trained Nurse an Assistant Nurse need not have had previous training; in other words, she may be allowed to enter the Infirmary for training as a Probationer. This regulation, then, may be regarded as a recognition of workhouse Infirmaries as

training schools, a fact of the highest significance and future importance, and one which, perhaps, foreshadows most important developments in the system of education for Nurses.

The remaining regulations are, if possible, even more important than those to which we have referred, and we must, therefore, return to their consideration next week.

Annotations.

THE LATTER DAY CONSULTING ROOM.

WE live in an æsthetic age, and the faculty for artistic arrangement which used to be considered a graceful accomplishment in a woman of leisure, but quite out of place amongst, and unworthy of the attention of, practical persons, is now highly valued wherever it is met with. Perhaps this may be the reason why medical men have moved with the times, and the consulting room of the leading physician or surgeon, is often suggestive of anything but physic and surgery. Another reason, perhaps, is that with the organization of their profession, and the consequent prestige conferred upon it, men of a higher social standing than formerly are attracted to its ranks. They no longer combine the occupation of barber with that of surgeon, and the country doctor, when making his rounds, does not nowadays ride into the yard, put up his own horse, and enter by the back door, but is treated, as his position entitles him to be treated, as an equal, and an honoured guest. A third reason for the change which has come over the consulting room of the modern medical man, and perhaps one which has been a more influential factor in its improvement than either of the other two which we have mentioned, is the element of refinement which has been introduced into our hospitals with the advent of the trained and educated nurse. Only twenty years ago hospitals were bare and dreary places. The grim articles necessary for surgical and other purposes, were displayed to the best advantage upon the window ledges and about the wards, screens were almost unknown, the patients' clothes were kept in open baskets under their beds, and their food in lockers, with their soap, and brushes and combs, at their bed-sides. The nurses, who spent a considerable time on their hands and knees scrubbing the floors, were not able even to nurse their patients efficiently, as we understand nursing, much less to attend to little refinements and niceties. But with the advent of the nurse of to-day all this is changed; gruesome instruments are kept locked out of sight, and the general impression received by a visitor to a hospital ward nowadays, is one of polished boards, pretty screens, decorative pots containing palms and ferns, while there is a pleasant rivalry, between the different wards, as to the excellence, and the

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