

The Nursing Record

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NOTICE.—Should any difficulty arise in obtaining the "Nursing Record" through local news-agents, it is advisable to order it direct from the Publishers.

EDITORIAL.

THERE has been much discussion of late about the troubles and trials of a Probationer's life. It was originated by a letter to an influential London contemporary, in which great complaints were made of the hardships to which Nurses are exposed, and has been followed by a flood of correspondence, supporting or contradicting the various assertions therein advanced. As, however, the net result of all the commotion appears to be, that a general feeling has been aroused in the public mind that Nurses are, upon the whole, very badly treated, it seems to us to be advisable to devote some attention to the subject. There is no doubt, on the one hand, that the calling of a Nurse cannot be made either luxurious or easy; but, on the other hand, there can be no conceivable reason why it should be made harder,

and more unhealthy, than is absolutely necessary. From some considerable experience we can confidently assert two things—firstly, that the majority of Nurses are kindly treated by those under whom they work; and, secondly, that at most Hospitals Nurses are over-worked and under-fed. We make these statements deliberately, and yet fully and frankly acknowledge that, at some Institutions, the work and the diet allotted to the Nursing Staff calls for all praise; and that at several Hospitals and Infirmaries, owing, we much regret to believe, to the character of the Matron, the lives of the Nurses are rendered wretched, and their work severe and most disagreeable. These, however, we consider are only the exceptions which prove the truth of the rules which we have enunciated.

In the first place, then, we argue that Trained Nurses are, in most Hospitals and nearly all private families, treated with kindness and consideration. Our readers, by their every-day experiences, are aware that this is so. The Staff Nurse must be the Sister's right hand and invaluable coadjutor; the Sister must be implicitly trusted by the Visiting and Resident Staff and by the Matron, and valued accordingly. If in either case this is not so, a change is, of necessity, made at once, because the discipline of the Institution could not be continued under other conditions. In Private Nursing, the Nurse must be entirely relied upon by the Doctor, or her place would soon be filled by another; and it may, we believe, be taken as an axiom, that Medical men are, almost without exception, most considerate and kind to Nurses. Consequently, it only remains to discuss the case of Probationers in this connection.

When it is remembered how novel the sights and sounds of a Hospital are at first, and how alarming many of these must be to a woman entirely unaccustomed to such experiences; what arduous work must be learnt and accomplished; and how entirely unprepared by previous experience most

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