

Nursing Echoes.

* * * All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.



THE resignation of Sir Thomas Smith, Bart., of the world-honoured position of Senior Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, is nothing less than a calamity—so long and honourable has been the connection of this great surgeon with our oldest Royal hospital—and in such affectionate regard is he held by his medical *confrères*. It is an open secret that the sisters of his wards—the majority of whom have worked under him for the last decade—simply adore “Tom Smith,” and there is no professional service which he could ask of them that they would not render with delight. Sir Thomas Smith is one of those liberal-minded and large-hearted men who, whilst maintaining strict discipline in the wards, never busies himself with pettifogging details of management which rightly belong to the nursing department, and he has a way of recognizing the skilled and laborious work of sisters and nurses which, of course, makes them his willing and devoted slaves. No wards in the hospital are more efficiently nursed, or more beautifully kept than those under the direction of Sir Thomas Smith, and the reason thereof is that he is the most humane of surgeons, and most kindly friend. Nurses and patients love and honour him.

It is reported that Miss Pyne, who has held the position of Lady Superintendent to the Westminster Hospital for many years, is about to resign, and no doubt there will be tremendous competition for this post. The training school in connection with this hospital has never adopted very advanced methods, and for many years gave a certificate at the end of twelve months' training.

It is very difficult to obtain information concerning the regulations for training from the officials of the Westminster Hospital, so that we fear they are hardly up-to-date. We learn, however, that probationers, to enter for training, have to enter into an agreement to continue “in the service of the committee for four years,” no certificate being given until the expiration of that period. This, of course, is permissible, if the nurse is receiving the advantage of educational methods in the wards of the hospital for this period, but we gather that the services of

the probationers are entirely at the discretion of the Committee of the Westminster Training School and Home for Nurses at 27, Queen Anne's Gate, but those services can be and are used for nursing in private families, long before the three years' term of practical experience in the wards has been passed.

UNDER these circumstances, the salaries are far from satisfactory. First year, nil; second year, £20; third year, £22; fourth year, £24. Private nurses, £25 per annum, rising yearly to a maximum of £40. So that after four years' experience, a private nurse on this staff may earn 9s. 8d. a week!!

THE fees charged the public for the services of these nurses is, for ordinary cases, £1 11s. 6d.; fever and mental, £2 2s.; so that a very large profit can be made out of their labour, whilst the private nurses of the metropolis, working on the co-operative system, are systematically undersold by this scale of fees.

To advise three-year certificated nurses to take some steps to protect themselves from the competition of Private Nursing Institutions which are run by hospitals, supported by the subscriptions of the charitable, and which can, therefore, afford to undersell the skilled workers, and which make large profits out of the nurses' labour, would, we fear, be quite useless, so lacking in self-respecting professional feeling have the majority of nurses proved themselves during the great fight, to preserve their present rights and privileges granted by the Royal Charter. But all the same we intend to allude to this matter in an early issue—and shall, as usual, be prepared to run the gauntlet of the animus of the nurse-sweater, a thankless task when the cowardice of the sweated is also taken into consideration.

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—“I am sure your remarks in relation to the wearing of uniform in the dock, are warmly echoed by trained nurses all over the world, and as one of those who have lately discarded a nursing out-door uniform, owing to the base uses to which it is now put without let or hindrance, I beg to thank you for your constant efforts to obtain for trained nurses many past privileges which are now being filched from them. It is an outrage that a woman who holds no professional status whatever, beyond having worked for a few weeks in a lying-in hospital, should be permitted to pose before the law as a member of our honourable profession, and be tried for the murder of her illegitimate offspring, in the outward mask of an honourable profession. Here, in the local district, the demure appearance of Elizabeth Brandish in the dock was much commented upon, and there is no doubt that the modish and puritanical dress of the trained nurse

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