

All applications and offers of services will be placed on file for future reference, and for selection of the most available persons for the special duty required in case of need.

No female nurses will be sent to Cuba or to hospitals on the Gulf Coast, and it appears probable, at present, that there will be no necessity for the employment of trained female nurses. All applications will, however, be placed on file for future reference in case of need.

GEO. M. STERNBERG,
Surgeon General, U.S. Army.

[This circular letter has been sent to us in answer to our letter of enquiry if a corps of English Nurses would be acceptable to the Government of the United States. We had no doubt, as we informed our readers, that the supply of nurses in the States, who have offered their services to nurse the wounded, would far outnumber the requirements of the Nation. It is reported that Surgeon General Van Reypen, of the United States Navy, is being almost inundated with applications from women all over the country for positions as nurses on the hospital ship Creole. The applications have averaged about twenty a day since the war excitement began. The situation is very embarrassing to the surgeon general, he says, for the reason that the law practically prohibits the employment of women on shipboard. All persons so employed must be regularly enlisted in the navy, a prerequisite to which is a severe physical examination. Eight male graduates of the New York Training School for Nurses have already been enlisted for service on the Creole, and it will be impossible for women to serve in that capacity. These men are rated as ships' cooks, second class, and receive pay at the rate of \$30 per month. There is nothing in the law, however which will prohibit the employment of women as nurses at the army and navy hospitals on shore, and it is possible that many of the patriotic women who have volunteered to serve in that capacity may be so assigned.—Ed.]

NURSING AT THE POOLE UNION INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I think it is only fair to the "Day Nurse," and myself, to contradict the following statements made against us, "Superintendent and Day Nurse" by the Guardians of the Poole Workhouse. The Clerk read a report from the Medical Officer of the Workhouse, who said he had to complain that his instructions were not carried out with reference to a water bed which was occupied by one of the female patients. The Superintendent Nurse had also neglected to carry out his instructions with reference to the feeding of certain inmates. The Clerk further stated that he had received a letter from one of the lady visitors, who stated that one of her colleagues, on visiting the house had received universal complaints about the Day Nurse. She feared that some of the old, and poor infirm women were not dealt with as they should be. One Guardian could bear out the statement of the Medical Officer as to the state in which the woman was left, the one on the water bed. I wish the Guardians and the public to know that the patients, in so far as our power lay, had every care and attention, though the above would lead one to believe they are sadly neglected, the woman mentioned was

always left in a clean, dry condition, with a hot water bottle filled with boiling water twice a day, and, as to the water bed, each day, as soon as hot water could be obtained, it was put into the bed, and I can truthfully say that not once was the water cold that was drawn off. Then again, as to the feeding of the patients, it had only been suggested the day of the Committee meeting that the nurse should feed the helpless patients; and this had been done before any such suggestion had been made. Let me add that I did *not* resign because I thought I should have been asked to do so, for I had done nothing to merit such a request, and though the Guardians may have power to request, it is certainly beyond their province to "dismiss" any superintendent nurse. What were "the other inconveniences" mentioned in my letter of resignation? One *great* inconvenience is, there is only one sink in which to wash every utensil that may be used in the sick wards, as well as all drinking pots, milk, and tea-cans, &c. Another *great* drawback is, the lying-in ward, there being only one ward for labour, and accouchment, and during the time I was there, there were two confinements—one, that of a syphilitic woman—was this fair to the other woman and child? All dirty lotions, &c., had to be taken downstairs to the *one* lavatory that all the other female patients used—average, twenty in number,—would medical men consider this safe? I was asked my candid opinion of the place, and when I mentioned some of the inconveniences I was asked by one of the Guardians: "did I expect to find an operating room?" When one is met with such questions, one naturally concludes, there is no alteration thought of, and consequently I deemed it best to resign early.

Thanking you in anticipation for publishing the above,
I am, Your's truly,

J. C. SPENCE,
Ex. Supt. Nurse.

[We are glad to insert this letter proving as it does the necessity for Poor Law reform.—Ed.]

COME AGAIN TO-MORROW.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Many unfortunate persons who visit hospitals under the impression that they will have a courteous reception, will thank you for your little skit on the Bumble *in embryo* at the Cancer Hospital. I am only a hospital sister, but one much interested in her profession, and I have called at many hospitals desirous of seeing over the institution, and by this means learning about their construction and nursing methods and—in the majority—I have received scant courtesy. It is generally quite impossible to approach the Matron and one is sent from pillar to post in a hopeless way, and as for information it is more difficult to extract than an eye tooth. Since a terrible experience of a Matron, who seeing me on the stairs, bawled at me from the hall below, to descend at once, I have never ventured to pay another visit to these "Palaces of Pain." I think many members of the general public will agree with you that hospital committees should impress upon their officials "the necessity of at least treating the public with some small degree of courtesy." The last thing one has a desire to do is "to come again to-morrow," after a visit to the majority of hospitals.

Yours truly,
"A HOSPITAL SISTER."

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