

and capable of doing it, but in 49 cases out of every 50 he is not. An intelligent young man who shows ambition and a love of his work, has a rapid rise in the Medical Staff Corps, and is soon removed from the crowd of ward workers to the superior rank of a "non. com." Hence the great bulk of the male nurses in the Army consists of the proverbial "old soldier," too stupid, or too inebriate, or too careless to get on, and of raw recruits who are sent into Hospital wards after a preliminary six month's drill and "fatigue" work at Aldershot, supplemented under favourable conditions by a few lectures on anatomy from a medical officer, and *one month's* daily instruction of half-an-hour, by a Nursing Sister, in the practice of nursing.

These are the Nurses who are expected to attend wounds, accidents, and difficult chronic cases, under the Sisters' superintendence. All the work in the Army has to be done promptly, and within a very limited time, ready for the daily routine of inspection by the Medical Officer. It has been my happy lot, in ten years, to meet at least five orderlies who could be trusted with the care of sick men during their (I mean the orderlies') waking hours.

A great difficulty surrounds the question of discipline—A British soldier is bound in subordination to one woman only, and he generally draws the line at every other. I believe it is laid down in the Manual for Hospital Orderlies that they should treat "these ladies (meaning the Sisters) with courtesy and tact;" of course, the conception of these terms would vary with the early training and social standing of the individual orderly. Soldiers are not *bound* to obey the Sisters' orders, and although a direct refusal to comply with a politely expressed wish is rare, still there is always the possibility of it—and that, perhaps, when the time wasted in reporting and carrying complaints through a channel to the fountain head, would mean wasting the patient's chances of recovery as well. The most satisfactory way is, undoubtedly, for the Sister to do all the really important part of the work herself (*sub rosa*), and let the orderly take the credit for it with his superiors.

The general paucity of materials to do efficient work with in Army Nursing, is a cause of angry surprise to a trained nurse, fresh from a good civil hospital. Lint, cotton-wool, tow, etc., are prescribed for each individual case in quarter yards, quarter ounces, etc. This, of course, is most wasteful in the end.

I have not said a word about the greatest drawback of Army Nursing, *i.e.*, the want in most Military Hospitals of skilled night nursing. But I think it would be obvious to anyone who has worked in them, that there is a crying demand for a regular and abundant supply of female

nurses as superintendents of nursing by night as well as by day. I will only state in conclusion that during my five months' turn of night duty at Netley I have frequently found every single night orderly asleep which is natural after a whole day's hard manual labour and exercise. On one occasion, when I intimated my intention of visiting a dangerously sick officer once or twice during the night, I was effectually prevented from finding the orderly asleep by his turning the key in the door of the officer's ward as I left it."

DISCUSSION.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick (London) opened the discussion by saying that it was quite conclusive that there was no efficient system of training male nurses in this country. The questions which she thought Miss Maud Smith would have suggested for discussion had she been present were:—

How are those men trained who do now work as male nurses, and of what does their training consist.

How are men in the future to obtain the right and just experience of their work to which they are entitled, and which they should possess before they undertake private work.

Could facilities for training be arranged for male nurses in our large training schools? At present there are no such facilities in this country. In America there are flourishing schools for male nurses, a lady-superintendent being at the head of the school in every case.

Miss Mollett (Southampton) said that when she was superintendent of nursing at the National Hospital, which was before this Hospital professed to train men as nurses, the male nurses there were drawn for the most part from the ranks of discharged army orderlies. She found these extremely unsatisfactory, not conscientious. They slept at night—constantly—they could see no reason why they should not do so. When remonstrated with they would say "But, Sister, I shall wake up in a moment if anyone calls." They were, she thought, invariably kind, but they took bribes—largely. If only they paid for the privilege, the patient's friends might bring in anything. The men were certainly very bribable. In the ward where there were epileptic boys the men were fairly satisfactory, but in this ward there was little or no nursing. Under the new system at the National Hospital, the male wards are under the charge of female sisters, who have male subordinates, and this plan, Miss Mollett said, she believed was found to work excellently.

Miss Stewart (London) said that it must be remembered that the class of men were absolutely different from the class of women from which nurses are drawn, and that the faults of the men were largely the faults of their class. She also commented upon the times off duty of the men in the Naval Hospitals. If out in the evening they were obliged to be in either at 11 o'clock that evening or at 6 o'clock next morning, but they might not come in between those hours.

Mrs. Spencer (London) said that she had been much interested in Miss Maud Smith's paper. It was quite evident that in the Military Hospitals there was no recognized system of training. Most of the cases for

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