

surgical, and obstetric nurses. But if this is so, many, indeed it is not too much to say, the majority of nurses, will find they do not possess the necessary qualifications for registration. What is to be done? Clearly, the sooner some standard of nursing education is defined the better, and it appears to me that the proper body to do this is the Matrons' Council. It is a Society, and the only one, which is composed of leaders of the nursing profession, and it is surely for nursing leaders to decide what should be required of the rank and file. This is the line which has been followed by the medical profession, and is the only reasonable one to take. It is time, I think, that hospital authorities should realize, more universally than they do at present, that they, as well as their nurses, have definite obligations. A nurse binds herself to a hospital on a three years' agreement, on the understanding that she receives a thorough training. She cannot possibly know what should be included in this term, it is for her superiors to decide, and more, it is for them to see that her interests are considered, and that she gets what she has bargained for. But the first step to giving a thorough training is to decide what should be included in it, and we look to the Matrons' Council to take its rightful position and to tell us.

Yours truly,

IN THE RANKS.

A QUESTION OF DISCIPLINE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I, and many others, would be so grateful for your opinion as to the relative positions of Matrons and House Surgeons in small provincial hospitals. In London and large hospitals, where there are many resident officials, the case is quite different, but in a small hospital, where the Matron and House Surgeon are the only resident officers, and are necessarily thrown together, the result, if they do not "hit it off," is much discomfort, certainly for the Matron. May I give the experience of a friend of my own as a case in point. She is Matron of a hospital of 50 beds, is a woman of good birth and education, 36 years of age, and has had fifteen years' experience of hospital work and management. She is a trained and certificated nurse. The House Surgeon in the same hospital is a young man of 25, he has had four years of hospital work, chiefly as student. He and my friend are on good terms, but this has only been brought about by a policy of complete self-effacement on her part. Soon after his arrival he gave her to understand that he considered himself not so much House Surgeon as Superintendent and Medical Officer, and said that he should stand no interference from anyone. He further said, "If any Matron in any hospital in which I was Medical Officer ever came into a ward when I was there I should request her to leave it at once, and I consider she has no *right* even to enquire about a patient's condition of me. If I choose to tell her as an act of courtesy that is another matter, she has no *right* to ask." Also he asserted his intention of spending as much time in the nurses' rooms as he chose. My friend, knowing him to be very professional in his conduct with the nurses, assured him that she for one had no objection to his doing so. His reply was: "It would be all the same if you had, I shall allow no one to dictate to me."

With regard to visiting the wards, my friend always makes her rounds between 8 and 9 a.m., and as this young man never leaves his bedroom till 11 a.m., or after (generally after) there is no fear of clashing. Naturally she does not go near while he is making his rounds, but she is really afraid to go, however much she may want to do so, all the rest of the day, as on one occasion she did so, and was snubbed by him before the Sister, to whom he was talking outside the ward.

It seems to me that these very young House Surgeons are much set up by having a lot of women under them who must obey them implicitly, and quite rightly too, and they resent the authority of the Matron over these nurses. They would like to have in her place a housekeeper to take all domestic worries off their hands, and to see that they are made comfortable, but who would be completely under their control and supervision. I know it will be said, there must be "give and take," but it seems that these young autocrats want all the "give" to be on one side, and all the "take" on the other.

I am, Madam,

Yours obediently,

MATRON.

[This letter deals with a vital question of Hospital Discipline, and is one of so much importance to the nursing profession generally, that we propose to devote our "Editorial" space in next week's issue to discussing the subject in detail; meanwhile we should welcome expressions of opinion on the question from those interested, in our "Correspondence" column.—Ed.]

HOUSEWIFERY CENTRE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—In answer to Miss Bewes's question, I think this, our new Centre will exactly meet her requirements. The students are taught cookery and laundry work, etc., by experts, and they learn practical housewifery, book-keeping, store, and linen room management, by carrying on those duties for the residence.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

E. M. HOMERSHAM,

Teacher in charge of Housewifery Centre,

121, Bath Street, Glasgow.

[Miss Homersham has kindly forwarded to us the prospectus of the Glasgow Training School of Cookery and Domestic Economy, which is most excellent. It appears to us that very little is required in addition to make the present course meet the needs of a curriculum of a thorough Preliminary School for the Profession of Nursing. The present course includes training for a Housewife's certificate. It comprises the following subjects:—Cookery in all its branches, Laundry Classes—how useful to future Matrons!; Lectures and Demonstrations on Household Management which includes spring cleaning, cleaning of silver, copper, brass, wax-stained floors, glass, wood, brushes, and all kinds of furniture; Lectures on Hygiene and Sick Nursing, on Physiology and Digestion, and the Chemistry of Food. It therefore includes much which a probationary nurse should know before entering a Hospital for training in practical sick nursing.—Ed.]

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