

larger hospitals. The nurses see a larger variety of cases in both medical and surgical wards than is the case in a large hospital—where they usually become expert in nursing the particular class of cases treated by one surgeon or physician—there are no students, they each, as a rule, have some months of theatre and out-patient work, and in such matters as the preparation and cleansing of instruments before and after operations, the nurse of the smaller hospital has unquestionably the advantage in point of training, as in a large hospital the care of these is not her duty, and when an operation is over, after the most superficial attention, they are returned to the curator, who is responsible for their thorough cleansing. The names of instruments, and their uses also, are not usually so familiar to the nurse of the large as of the small hospital.

WE arrive therefore at the conclusion that the efficient organization of the training school, the quality of the nursing, and the discipline enforced, are of more value in the education of nurses than the mere number of beds in the hospital, and these points should undoubtedly be considered in determining what is an efficient training school. If we dig deeper we shall find that the primary factor in providing efficient nurses is the personality and capacity of the Matron, for on this all the above-mentioned points largely depend. The "making of Matrons," therefore, is a point of the utmost importance.

AN efficient standard can never, therefore, be based solely upon the number of beds of the training schools. What number should be held to be the least upon which a nurse can be thoroughly trained, and what tests should be imposed in order to ascertain her efficiency are points which may well be presented to the International Conference, next year, for its deliberation.

WE have received many comments upon our remarks with regard to nurses' uniform, and while we still hold the view that this honourable badge should be protected, and that the remedy for the abuse of it should not be that it should be discarded by the only people who have a right to wear it we must say that from the conversations we have had with various nurses, there is much to be said for the other side of the question for the moment. There is no doubt that nurses in uniform cannot walk about the West End in these days without incurring disagreeable risks. In the East it is different, things may be rougher down there, but at least nurses are treated with more respect than is the case in the more civilised West.

THE moral of the disrepute in which uniform is at present held, is undoubtedly that it is only by combination that nurses can protect their own interests, and that they must demand that a nursing as well as a medical register shall be issued, and that only those whose names are placed upon it shall be recognised as trained nurses.

WHEN once this becomes law, and, as a matter of bare justice, it must come, sooner or later, then certainly nurses should insist that only those whose names are on their professional register should have the right to wear their professional uniform. Until, however, nurses, have sufficient courage to demand the organization of their own profession, and its ranks are consequently infested with semi-trained, and unsuitable persons, and their uniform adopted by persons having no right to it whatsoever, so long will they suffer from the disrepute which is brought upon their calling by such persons.

MRS. M. T. RYAN, Matron of the Limerick District Asylum, a position which she has filled for over twelve years, has tendered, her resignation of the position. The resident superintendent—Dr. O'Neill, asked that the Board should appoint in her stead a trained nurse, as the position of Matron had been abolished in all other district asylums. The governors decided to deal with the suggestion at their next meeting. It is to be hoped that Dr. O'Neill's request will be granted, as it is only by means of trained superintendence, that an efficient system of nursing and education for mental attendants can be attained in asylums for the insane.

VICTOR HUGO, in one of his most striking chapters of "Les Miserables," tells us that the street arab of Paris, who respects nothing else, is always polite to Sisters of Charity. The fact is, the Paris gamin is the quintessence of the spirit of the city—cynical, critical, satirical, sceptical, but moved to something like respect and even reverence when real suffering encounters real self-sacrifice. The nursing Sisters have furnished Paris with more than one municipal saint, canonised in the popular mind, especially in the terrible cholera epidemics which Paris has gone through. Readers of Eugene Sue's masterly descriptive romances of the town will recall examples of this feeling.

AFTER reading of all the horrors of nursing in the military camps during the Hispano-American war, it is a relief to find that at the United States General Hospital at Porto Rico, the nurses have much to be thankful for.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)