

than the supply that could easily be balanced by putting up the prices. We have always advocated that nurses, who receive a valuable education, should contribute to the cost of it, as is the case with pupils in other professions. At Addenbrooke's Hospital, however, the probationers already pay £40 the first year, and £20 the second, and as they give also three years' work, we think that they pay as much as can be expected of candidates for the certificate of a provincial hospital. It must be remembered that the number of applicants, which would naturally be reduced if a higher fee were offered, may be so limited that a sufficient choice is not offered the institution of obtaining good nurses, and, before all things, the nursing staff must be kept up to the maximum efficiency obtainable. If no fees were charged at present to the probationers we should think the suggestion to require a premium a good one, but we do not think it is reasonable or desirable to ask them to pay a larger fee than £60.

DO WOMEN NURSES SMOKE ?

THIS question, which has already been discussed in the *NURSING RECORD*, is receiving some attention on the other side of the Atlantic, and the following views of Miss Irene H. Sutcliffe, the directress of the training school for nurses connected with the New York Hospital, as communicated to a representative of the press, will, we think, be of interest to our readers:—

"I have been in the profession twenty years," she said, "and I could not begin to estimate the number of nurses with whom I have come in contact. In these twenty years I have met only one nurse who smoked, and her standing in the profession was so bad that she was obliged to leave it. I should not consider that a woman who smoked was fit to be a member of the profession. As to its being a 'shocking or derogatory confession,' I think it is both. As to its being 'mannish,' it certainly is not 'womanly.' Regarding the 'niceness of personalities,' in connection with smoking, I think the odour must in a measure cling to the hair and garments, and if freeing the breath from its traces were only a matter of 'toothbrush and water,' many men who, in spite of that precaution, still have its odour on their breath would be free from it. As to the statement that barred from the use of cigarettes nurses would have 'sore throats,' it is absurd! Where disinfectants are desired there are many that are harmless and pleasant. When a nurse

comes in contact with infectious diseases, she can find plenty of disinfectants. Her instruction in the training school includes all necessary information on this subject. Of course, nurses have 'worries,' but other people have them, too; and as regards the use of tobacco to obtain relief, you might just as well say, why not use opium, which is conducive temporarily to that state of mind. In the direction of 'pleasures,' so far as nurses are concerned, there are plenty of pleasures within their reach that are much more befitting a woman. The same opportunities, in a somewhat more limited degree, are open to them as to other women. Women who can only find their pleasures in narcotics, tobacco and excitements, might much better turn their thoughts in some other direction than nursing. Nurses are, as a rule, happy and cheerful. A woman understands that she undertakes 'worries' when she enters the profession, and if she is not fitted to endure them and the hard work, she ought not to think of being a nurse. It is conceded that tobacco deadens the sense of taste, and that patients are more sensitive in this direction than healthy people. It follows then that if a nurse is an habitual smoker her sense of taste is blunted, and her ability to prepare food to suit the delicate palate of the patient is therefore impaired. There is no 'right time,' and there is no 'proper place' for a woman to smoke. 'Happy serenity of manner' is largely a matter of temperament and personality, and I doubt very much whether a person lacking it naturally could acquire it by the use of tobacco. All the assistance that can be given in that direction is afforded by the discipline and training a nurse receives in the training school, where she is drilled to display calmness and self-control at all times. I think that narcotics of any kind are bad for a nurse. By smoking a nurse loses her womanliness, which is her greatest attribute, and I would not consider a woman who indulged in this habit fit to fill the place of a nurse."

We think that the public generally will entirely endorse Miss Sutcliffe's views. At the same time, we must say that in this country we are of opinion that many nurses smoke, simply because many English women smoke. The habit is one which is indulged in in this country by women from the highest in the land downwards, and nurses are by no means exempt from it. It is more than likely that, in the first instance, private nurses have frequently acquired the habit while in attendance upon aristocratic patients.

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