

The Yeomanry Hospital.**"WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS."**

WE are sorry that we are unable to give our readers any information with regard to the nursing staff appointed to the Yeomanry Hospital. A representative of the NURSING RECORD has called three times upon Mme. Van André, hoping to receive information on this subject, just as the Medical Department of the War Office courteously furnishes us with the names of the nurses selected by it for duty in South Africa.

At Mme. Van André's request, we published, in a former issue, an account of the Yeomanry Hospital and its needs, to which we added the following criticism:—"We are sorry to learn that, so far, there is no past or present Matron on the Committee of the Yeomanry Hospital to advise on nursing matters. The departments of a hospital naturally fall under the headings Medical, Nursing, and Secretarial. It will be noticed that there is a medical committee, and that a civilian director has been appointed, but that nursing interests are not represented. It is not easy for the laity to understand that medicine and nursing are two distinct professions, and that nurses, while subordinate to medical men as regards the treatment of the sick, are, in matters of discipline and training, under the control of the heads of their own profession, who alone can give expert advice with regard to their selection. The failure to recognize this truth has, before now, been the undoing of more than one carefully planned undertaking. We, therefore, take this opportunity of drawing attention to it."

This is certainly a legitimate criticism in a nursing paper and, in the interests of the nursing profession, we could not well have said less; but in an interview with Mme. Van André this week, our representative learnt that these remarks had given umbrage. The following conversation took place.

Mme. Van André: "I notice that, in the NURSING RECORD, you said that we had no Matrons on the Committee of the Yeomanry Hospital."

Our Representative: "Yes, we did."

Mme. Van André: "Why should you say that? We did not want that said; and if you say these things about us, why should we give you any information?"

Our Representative: "It is the duty of the NURSING RECORD to look after the interests of the nursing profession, and this is a matter upon which we feel very strongly."

Mme. Van André: "You say you feel strongly about it, but we think we do look after the

interests of the nursing profession. We don't want the Matrons."

Our Representative: "You would not select the medical staff without the advice of the medical profession. The point is that you recognize medicine as a profession, but you fail to recognize nursing in the same way."

We record this conversation to show the attitude adopted by some Society women towards the profession of nursing. That these ladies should, at the present time, interest themselves in this hospital is natural and right; but that persons who have never done a day's work in a hospital should take upon themselves the responsibility of selecting the nurses to whom the lives of our sick and wounded soldiers are to be entrusted, without any expert assistance, is indefensible. We are of opinion that the least this Committee could have done would have been to invite some of the Superintendents of Nursing of the leading Training Schools to be good enough to give them the benefit of their expert advice in this important matter. As these ladies have chosen to undertake this professional duty themselves, without possessing any qualifications for the task, we must call upon the Committee of the Yeomanry Hospital to publish the names and qualifications of the nurses selected, without delay. This they owe to the public who have subscribed the funds for the equipment and organization of the Yeomanry Hospital. There should be no reason for withholding these names, if properly trained nurses have been selected.

Begging Away.

THE old proverb that "everything comes to him who waits," is invariably true if *he* continues to "peg away" meanwhile. It is now just eleven years since we sent in our first suggestions to the War Office concerning the formation of a Volunteer Corps of Nurses, four years since we attacked the question of military nursing reform in this journal, a question which we have kept before the nursing profession and the public from time to time at nursing conferences.

Apparently, little progress was being made, but we have great faith in the efficacy of "continual dropping," and at last the interest of the medical profession and the public is being aroused in this question of national importance—the *efficient nursing, on modern lines*, of our brave sailors and soldiers who go forth and pour out their blood like water, or risk death by suffering horrible diseases, in the defence of our Empire and our homes.

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