

**Notes on Practical Nursing.****MALE CATHETER CASES.**

WE have communicated with several Matrons of important training schools, with the object of eliciting their views on the subject of the duty of nurses with regard to male catheter cases. The uniform opinion seems to be that the article which we published last week covered the whole ground, and voiced the views of the nursing profession generally on the question. We are informed that in one hospital where there is no resident medical officer, the porter has, in certain cases, been instructed by the visiting surgeon to perform this duty, which has subsequently been entrusted to him; but, when we consider the multifarious duties of a hospital porter, and the need of scrupulous and absolute cleanliness in these cases, if cystitis is to be avoided, this suggestion will not, we think, meet with favour, more especially as hospitals are institutions which undertake to supply the public with skilled assistance.

Of the letters received we print the following:

MISS ELIZABETH FISHER, Superintendent of Nurses at the General Infirmary, Leeds, writes:—  
"I am in receipt of yours of the 19th inst., but it seems to me that the subject has been dealt with so efficiently that nothing more remains to be said. In a large hospital like this, where there are twelve Residents, such a duty, of course, would never be required of a nurse and, in my opinion, ought not to be under any circumstances, except in cases of emergency."

MISS POOLE, Matron of the Infirmary, Blackburn, writes:—"In your issue of October 20th I find an article which interests me considerably, on the subject of the use of the male catheter by nurses. Some years ago I had occasion to send a nurse to a private case where a male catheter had to be used. I selected a nurse who was not a young woman and told her the nature of the case, at the same time explaining that the patient was old, peculiarly sensitive, and felt the greatest distress at having to require such services. She point blank refused to go to the case, and I expressed very strongly my sense that a woman who could look at her duty from such a false standpoint was, in my opinion, not pure-minded enough for the work she was undertaking. An appeal to the Senior Surgeon, made by her, drew forth the statement from him that, while he considered her entirely in the wrong, the Committee, he believed, would support her view of the case. As I was at the time severing my connection with that Committee, I did not test the question, but felt sure he spoke from experience. I think, as to the use of the male catheter in private, a great deal must be left to the judgment of the

person who has either the engaging of the nurse or the choice of nurses for these special cases. Having had many years' experience in sending out private nurses, I know that there are cases to which *no woman* should be sent, but these are few in number; in most instances a really high-minded nurse can do what is required without any injury to her modesty or self-respect. But the matter is quite otherwise in Hospital; and, so far as I have had experience, I have never heard of a House Surgeon requiring a Sister or a nurse to do his duty for him, or even assist him in any way in such a case. In this Infirmary both the Honorary Staff and the House Surgeons are most careful and considerate in their treatment of patients and nurses, performing all such duties with the bed carefully screened while the Sister or nurse waits outside the screens to supply whatever may be needed. Were such a difficulty to arise as that of a House Surgeon *ordering* a Sister or nurse to perform his duty for him, I should at once appeal to the Medical Board, who, I doubt not, would set the matter right. Failing this, I would send in the Sister's resignation to the Managing Board, with a plain statement from myself as to why she was leaving, and place the decision in their hands. Such a course of action would probably show the House Surgeon that he, as well as the Sister, would have to submit to a higher authority and that he would be held responsible for the proper performance of all such duties. I hope the Matron you write of will be able to hold her own in this matter, as it would manifestly be unjust if a Sister were found to leave under the circumstances you describe."

**Legal Matters.**

WE recently recorded the appearance, in the dock at the Marylebone Police Court, of a woman, dressed in nursing uniform, on a charge of begging in the Edgware Road. She was remanded in order that enquiries might be made. On Thursday in last week this woman, Alice Nielson, was again brought up, before Mr. Curtis Bennett. She assured the Court that she had been trained at the City of London Lying-in Hospital. Mr. Bennett was, however, of opinion that she had adopted the nurse's uniform with a view to exciting sympathy, and sentenced her to six weeks' imprisonment.

Mary Fraser, of many aliases, a notorious thief, and stated to be a trained nurse, was last Monday convicted of theft at the Folkestone Quarter Sessions, and sentenced to three years' penal servitude. Let us hope that when she comes out of jail legal registration of nurses will be in force.

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