

the nurses often went out odd days and hours without consulting me, simply said they were going.

If I asked for Infirmary requirements I was told clothing, sheets, &c. were not nursing and I was to mind my own business; one day I asked for some missing clothes from the wash and was told by the matron to "get out if that was all I wanted, she would not waste her wind on me."

The inmates were told (once before me) that I could not have them punished for insolence and abuse, not unless they struck me.

The nurses simply defied me, and often turned round and shouted at me.

If I appealed to the Committee the Master was there and told the most deliberate falsehoods, or I found he had been doing some underhand mischief-making.

I should make this letter too long if I related one tenth part of my experience in Poor Law nursing.

But it seems to me a great scandal that these things should be, can nothing be done? England calls herself a just nation and sent out armies to fight the Boers on the plea of their tyranny, and yet this mean cowardly persecution of nurses is allowed, or winked at in our own native land.

A nurse is appointed as a superintendent of nursing, care is taken that her character and qualifications are up to the mark, and when she is willing and anxious to do her duty conscientiously, she is worried and hampered, and treated as if she were every one's enemy.

Cannot the Local Government Board do anything? I think if Masters and Matrons of this class were made an example of, these scandals would soon stop, or better still, chose these officials from a superior class who would be above these despicable ways.

I would say to Boards of Guardians if they appoint a superintendent nurse they ought to treat her with the respect she deserves, or, if they don't want one, let them fight the Local Government Board like men, and not appoint a nurse and make her life a misery to her.

A. E. R.

#### THE INFECTIOUS PRIVATE NURSE.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to see the question of the disinfection of Private Nurses discussed in your journal, and after personal experience of the very casual methods adopted by some private nurses, I was not all surprised to read of the case where the "peeling" influenza nurse endangered the lives of six of her fellow creatures, amongst whom presumably she scattered infection wholesale. I know for a fact that nurses returning from fever cases do not send their outdoor uniform to be disinfected, but are quite satisfied by disinfecting it, in the fresh air—or in other words by going through the streets, into buses and trains, in clothes worn over their indoor washing uniform, during their attendance on these cases. Many nurses scoff at the idea of carrying infection in this way, and I have also heard the manager of a Nurses' Home, pooh-pooh a likelihood of danger from the same cause. Again it is most difficult for nurses to find a comfortable disinfecting house, and I heartily endorse your suggestion that the new Borough Councils, especially in Marylebone, where hundreds of private nurses reside, should

provide such a house, for the public safety. Knowing the carelessness of nurses in the methods of disinfecting, was my reason for living in rooms—which is often very lonely and depressing—when I took up maternity nursing as a speciality, I dare not run the risk of living in a house where nurses are admitted during the disinfecting period.

Yours truly,

"A MATERNITY NURSE."

#### MOIST HEAT.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM, I was very much interested in reading your remarks last week in the NURSING RECORD upon the treatment of pneumonia, and the subjection of the patient to dry rather than moist heat. While one knows from personal experience how grateful inhalations of steam are in any bronchial trouble, one can easily understand that to live for several weeks in a warm moist atmosphere, the air moreover being more or less impure—for the patient is carefully kept in a tent, and hence must re-breathe expired air to some extent—may be very prejudicial to one suffering from pulmonary trouble. We are more and more learning the value of pure air to those whose lungs are in any way affected, and whose breathing capacity is therefore diminished. It is a reasonable theory that the air supplied to those portions of the lungs which are in working order should be as pure as possible, so that compensation may to some degree take place and the system of the patient suffer as little as may be from deficient oxygenation of the blood. Do we attain this end when we place our patient in a tent having only one small opening, and in which the air can only be changed by throwing back the curtains, a course manifestly so dangerous that it is rarely attempted? I am inclined to think that the days of the entire steam tent are numbered and that our descendants will regard it with much the same horror that we have for the ancient four-post bedstead, which in former days was in general use.

I have been led to this discussion of the "tent" because it is essential to the application of the steam treatment as at present understood, but I am also inclined to think—may a nurse be permitted to think on these subjects?—that the continuous application of moist heat as applied by means of a steam kettle is very enervating, and we all know how important it is that the strength of a patient suffering from pneumonia should be well maintained. One has some parallel to this, I suppose, in a moist, tropical climate, and it is well known that there is no more trying, or, indeed, deadly climate in the world. One can stand many more degrees of heat when the atmosphere is dry than when it is moist, and not suffer from it, in fact may keep in a healthy condition. But has anyone ever lived in a tropical place where the climate is moist, who has not become enervated, anæmic, and probably sooner or later broken down under the strain? If so, I have yet to meet that person. My experience has been an entirely contrary one, and I have known many who have been residents in such a climate.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

WANDERER.

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