

money upon an inefficient and wasteful system is to cease.

A long study of the relative position of Workhouses as they lie scattered about England, and the distribution of the patients in each, has convinced me that the Infirmaries may be reduced to between one-fourth and one-fifth of the present number without obliging the sick to be carried, or the friends or Guardians to have to travel an undue distance from their own Unions. This reduction in numbers would cause a considerable increase in the number of Infirmaries large enough to be utilized as training schools without being of unwieldy size, that is, between 200 and 500 beds. It would almost entirely do away with the small Infirmaries, the crucial difficulty. Economically, it would do away with a considerable number of nurses, and it would reduce very considerably the expense of maintaining so many different establishments as at present, at least so far as the sick part is concerned. The Institutions would then be capable of supplying their own vacancies with their own probationers, and of having a large surplus of trained nurses for other purposes. The other purposes would be the supply of trained nurses to those smaller Institutions, one hundred to two hundred beds, which were sufficiently modern and well managed to make it possible to properly nurse in them. Again, the acutely sick, who could only be removed to the nearest Union, would be attended to by a trained nurse sent down from the surplus staff of the larger Institution to which it sent its patients. There would be a few isolated very small Infirmaries who would also be dependent on these large Institutions, and as the Infirmaries found in Wales are, with two exceptions, too small to train, and too isolated to be abolished, they would also be dependent upon the surplus staff.

This scheme is, therefore, a union of Unions, but instead of those being isolated from one another they would be all united together by the aid of a Central Body, who would be charged with the duty of keeping up the standard, acting as intermediary, and like a guardship, retaining the names of those nurses on the books of the Service while they were on leave, or, as a temporary measure, while they were on a central list to which the Guardians could apply for nurses to fill vacancies. The saving of the cost of advertisements alone by such a list would be very large.

Finally, the attractions which will have to be held out, firstly to suitable women to enter as probationers, and secondly to trained nurses to remain in or to enter the service, will have to be very much increased if the services of these women are to be obtained in reasonable numbers.

With this brief sketch of the remedies I suggest,

I am, Madam,

Faithfully yours,

F. R. HUMPHREYS, L.R.C.P. Lond.

27, Fellows Road, N.W.

August 29th, 1901.

A POOR LAW NURSING DEPARTMENT.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Will you allow me to correct a slight inaccuracy, which might prove misleading, in the letter signed "Render to Cæsar, &c.," in your issue of the 24th inst. The suggestion that a Nursing Department should be formed by the Local Government Board was

made by our Association as far back as 1896, and has since been urged in our annual reports. Our report for last year concludes with these words:—

"The experience of our Committee, extending over twenty-one years, points to certain necessary changes and reforms, and we consider that all efforts would be greatly strengthened and aided by the formation by the Central Authority of a Nursing Sub-Section or Committee."

Had we owed the suggestion to your journal we should certainly have mentioned the fact. We are, however, glad that the NURSING RECORD, and other medical and nursing papers, lend their support to the view that a Nursing Department would greatly help in the present *impasse*.

I regret to say that four years ago the idea of a Nursing Department did not meet with any warmer official encouragement than it received this month from Mr. Long, to whom the proposal was submitted by us as early as March of this year.

Faithfully yours,

J. WILSON,

Treasurer Workhouse Infirmiry Nursing Association.

6, Adam Street,
Adelphi,

August 27th.

[The suggestion was made in the NURSING RECORD some years ago. The above letter proves how different people arrive simultaneously at the same point. The main thing is to get the Nursing Department of the Local Government Board inaugurated by whomsoever suggested.—ED.]

THE TRAINED NURSE AS A FACTOR IN CIVILIZATION.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was glad to read your remarks last week on the value of the work of nurses abroad in training the natives of uncivilized countries. I know from personal observation the truth of what you say. In the lives of Orientals as a rule the importance of time is absolutely unappreciated, discipline is a word the meaning of which they are totally ignorant. It is no small thing that they should learn both these lessons, and the strict but kindly régime of the trained nurse is the happiest possible educator. When her pupils learn to understand that she means what she says, that when she insists things have to be done, and that the most specious excuse will not stand the test of her examination, they usually settle down into tractable, orderly, and valuable members of the community. Again, the employment of British nurses in tropical countries is so expensive, entailing as it does cost of passage, of outfit, and of frequent furloughs if health is to be maintained, that it is obvious if trained nursing is to be available to any general extent it must be by training the natives of the country to perform it. I may say in this connection that in one hospital with which I am acquainted the best evidence that the value of the training given is appreciated by the natives themselves is that the girls who are trained there are always in great demand as wives.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

WANDERER.

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