

cardinal mistake to place in their hands the arrangement of leave for the Nursing Sisters. This should be the province of the Head Sister, to whom they should report themselves on and off duty.

The Nursing Sisters are assisted in the wards by stewards and attendants on the Sick Berth Staff to the latter of whom they are to give such instruction in nursing as may be necessary. They are to assist in training the sick-berth attendants in practical nursing duties in the method of handling patients, applying dressings, administering medicines, diets, and "extras," and in sick room cookery.

They are responsible for the personal cleanliness of the patients confined to bed, for the due administration of medicines, appliances, diets, and "extras," and are required to attend and assist at operations. On the death of a patient, the Nursing Sister of the ward is immediately to notify the Medical Officer, the Head Sister, and the Ward Master.

Nursing Sisters are also without delay to represent any neglect of duty or impropriety of conduct on the part of any of the sick-berth staff or patients to the Ward Master, who is responsible for the maintenance of discipline in the wards, as well as for the cleanliness of the wards, passages, staircases and furniture. Practically, therefore, the sister has no authority in regard to the cleanliness and order of her ward. A report by the Nursing Sister to the Head Sister, detailing the facts, is also to be made in all such cases, and this report, together with the remarks of the Head Sister thereon, is to be forwarded by the latter to the Medical Officer in charge of the ward for such action as he may think desirable.

If Nursing Sisters are in any doubt or difficulty reference is to be made at once to the Head Sister.

Reports or suggestions which Nursing Sisters may have to make relating to their duties are to be submitted through the Head Sister to the Principal Medical Officer for the consideration of the Medical Director-General.

The Medical Officer in charge of wards is required without delay to notify to the Head Sister any neglect or misconduct on the part of a Nursing Sister, and, if necessary, to report the same to the Principal Medical Officer, who is to forward a full report of the case to the Medical Director-General.

The Matrons' Council recommended that the Sisters in charge of wards should be responsible to the Medical Officers for carrying out all directions for the treatment of the sick, and should be responsible to the Head Sister for the good order and cleanliness of their wards. That they should personally superintend the service of food, and should have authority to ensure the strict carrying out of medical directions with regard to dieting.

Also that they should be responsible for the systematic clinical instruction of the Sick Berth Attendants in practical nursing.

In relation to the Sick Berth Attendants the Matrons' Council advised that their training should last not less than three years, during which time they should receive systematic instruction, and that they should be periodically subjected to examination in the subjects in which they have been taught. While in the wards they should be subject to the authority of the Ward Sister who is responsible to the various authorities for the due performance of their work and for their personal discipline on duty, and that they should be deputed to duty by the Head Sister, power of suspension for inefficiency or misconduct being vested in the Deputy-Inspector General on the Report of the Head Sister.

NEED OF A NURSING DEPARTMENT.

Undoubtedly the most important suggestion made by the Matrons' Council was the need for the formation of a Nursing Department in affiliation with the Medical Department at the Admiralty, superintended by a fully-trained and administrative nursing officer, her duties being

I. In conjunction with the Director-General to deal with all matters of organisation and discipline in the Nursing Department.

II. In conjunction with the Director-General to select all Nursing Officers.

III. The periodical inspection of the Nursing and Domestic departments of Naval Hospitals.

It is greatly to be hoped now that the regulations for the Navy Nursing Service are being altered that they will be brought up to date in this respect. Sooner or later, we hope sooner, the Admiralty will be compelled to move with the times, and to have a Nursing Department at Headquarters controlling the Navy Nursing Service. It is noticeable under the present regulations that although the position of the Head Sister is an improvement on that originally accorded her, yet the Nursing Sisters are still under the control of the medical officers not only in relation to the care of the sick, but also as to their personal discipline and the regulation of their hours on and off duty. The highest possible efficiency will never be obtained until the personal control of the Sisters is placed in the hands of a Superintendent of Nursing. Also the Ward Sisters must be held responsible not only for the care of the patients, but for every department of their wards.

The Matrons' Council further advised the appointment of Night Superintendents ranking as Senior Sisters, under whose superintendence the Junior Sisters and Sick Berth Attendants should work. It is unquestionable that this reform would be for the betterment of the sick sailor.

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