

“Miss Perry, besides the Nursing, has made conserves for the family, done embroidery, and many other things, but cannot understand why Nurses should be classed with the servants.

“Miss Hutchinson, Superintendent of Nurses, Homœopathic Hospital, thinks that ‘much of the trouble arises with the servants, who cannot realise that illness instead of the Nurse causes the extra work. They are also inclined to consider Nurses on an equality with themselves, instead of being a picked class of women, chosen for their intelligence, good character, and adaptability for the work, and this is the occasion for a good deal of jealousy.

“The work of Nurses is not yet fully appreciated—going forth into families, to stand between life and death, and doing their best to alleviate suffering, and carry out the Physician’s orders as professional women, and not domestics.

“We have instances where a Nurse was expected to take care of a fretful, troublesome child, like any ordinary nursery maid. I would not censure a Nurse for returning to the Hospital if required to eat in the kitchen with the servants while the family eat elsewhere. Many of our Nurses are socially on an equality with the Physicians, and no one expects *them* to eat with the domestics, unless it is a necessity.’

“Mrs. Mary Cox, Graduate Buffalo General Hospital Training School, says: ‘So all we Trained Nurses are good for is to take pulse and temperatures of a patient! Trained Nurses are holding indignation meetings everywhere, on account of the attacks made upon us, in your paper, mainly by Physicians who seldom employ them.’ She objects to the term ‘Professional Nurses,’ unless applied to those who have taken a course of training and instruction, and hold their diplomas. ‘If there are those who have so much to say against us, there is also a large number of persons who will testify in our favour. Two years’ Hospital training specially fits Nurses to act intelligently for Surgical cases, or at the time of a crisis or emergency, and report symptoms. We ought not to be expected to do the house-work, any more than Physicians are to fill up coal stoves, or care for the lawn, and although I have often performed the duties of Nurse, besides that of cook, laundress and housemaid, I do not go to the house for that purpose. Well do I remember the indignation of a family where I had been nursing for forty-eight hours without sleep, when I fell asleep in my chair, while the patient was having a nap. If we are Nurses trained for the profession, we are still human.’

“Miss F. E. Bicknell, Graduate Buffalo General Hospital Training School, exclaimed:—‘Of all absurd titles, that of “Professional Nurse” for

others than Trained Nurses, it is the worst! As for working, I have done nearly every kind when out nursing; but if anything had gone wrong with my patient while I was in the kitchen, I would have been severely censured for it. One family complained because I was unreasonable enough to require nine hours’ sleep during one week. Another said, “Sleep! I thought you went to the Hospital to learn to do without sleep!”

“At other places they have inquired how *little sleep* I could get along with. As for “making our own beds,” the Nurse usually has none to make, but takes her rest just as she can, on a short tête-à-tête with her feet hanging over the arm, on the floor with a pillow and comfortable, and sometimes on a fairly good lounge. During several years’ experience in nursing, I could count on one hand the number of times a bed has been provided for my use.

“I have been used up from my work, but do not think it was from taking pulse and temperature that did it either. I am enthusiastic to nurse where we are considered to be human, but the class for whom we do the most are the ones from whom we receive the least pay, or perhaps do not pay their bills at all. It is all right we are willing to work for the “Nabobs who pay fifteen dollars per week,” as Dr. L. says, and if there are any who are not satisfied with us let them hire the “professional” Nurses who have not been injured by two years’ Hospital Training.’—C.”

NURSING ECHOES.

* * * *Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are especially invited for these columns.*

I QUOTED several interesting paragraphs last week from the last report of St. John’s House. It is not generally known that beyond its special work of Nursing, dinners for sick people are supplied daily from St. John’s House so far as the resources of the Poor Fund will admit. In the very poor districts which lie round St. Clement Danes Church and St. Mary-le-Strand, the number of those who need additional nourishment to aid their recovery from sickness is by no means small, and it may be readily imagined that the applications for such help are numerous. The greater number of invalids relieved in this way are out-patients of King’s College Hospital, and are sent with letters of recommendation from the Medical Staff. Assistance of this kind can only be given to a very limited extent, it appears, as the special fund which supplies it is but small, and depends entirely upon voluntary offerings.

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