

chemist in the "cahier de visite"; the mixtures and pills, &c., are brought hence from the "pharmacie" and laid on the shelf at the head of each bed. Once there, the patient can take it, sipping from the bottle an unknown amount, and as often or seldom, or not at all, just as he chooses. The temperatures are taken by the "externes" coming twice a day to the hospital, in the wards where the visiting doctor is particular, by the nuns otherwise, thrusting the thermometer in the bedclothes with no other care.

When the visiting doctor wants information about the patients he inquires from the "interne"\* or asks the patient himself. The "internes" are responsible for their wards and sole masters when the "Visiting" is not there. They can come in at any time, day or night, find fault if they choose to do so, examine patients how and as long as they want. I saw one strip a girl's chemise off and oblige her to lie naked on her bed in full view of all the ward, so that he might more conveniently study the kind of skin disease she had—no screens, of course; they do not exist. She begged and struggled not to be thus exposed, but he declared her temper was bad, and to punish her did not hasten over this revolting proceeding. The nun was somewhere about, but kept out of the way.

Moreover, the nuns are fettered by regulations, which prevent their ever becoming adequate nurses. For instance, I heard once a lecturer turn towards the male group of listeners to explain how to give vaginal douches, and to put the patient in the obstetric position, &c., because the Daughters of Charity Vincent de Paul (the most popular of hospital nuns), sitting on the other side, were not allowed to give such improper care to the patients! It appears incredible, but it is a fact, that patients who undergo gynaecological operations are shaved by those coarse, vulgar men-servants, or by the young students. . . .! Nuns consider it sinful, and Heaven knows all the wickedness that has been the consequence of their absurd prejudice. I have often seen these men-servants giving douches in the theatre, carrying half-naked patients, and coarsely joking . . . though the nun at a distance could hear and see!

They seem to be ever busy counting clean or dirty linen. They adorn the altars in the ward with all kinds of paper flowers and laces, straighten counterpanes (though the beds are seldom made), and look after the general orderly appearance of the ward. But cupboards, closets, back passages, even underneath the altars they are so proud of in their wards, you find dirt, disorder, all kinds of refuse and infectious encumbrances. But the linen store seems to be one of the aims of their lives, and they spend months folding in the most complicated and varied ways the hospital linen, till the linen room seems to be an exhibition of all possible designs, where you would be at a loss to distinguish a shirt from a towel. But night work is the worst; for instance, the big St. Andrew Hospital, which numbers from 700 to 900 patients, has only two nuns in attendance during the night, from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m., one on the male side, accompanied by an infirmier, and one on the female side, with an infirmière, and they go about, passing only twice through the same ward—for there are many of them. The wards

\*The "internes" are medical students in their third or fourth year of study. They live in the hospital and are paid (the posts are obtained through a competition) and look after the patients, doing much of real nurses' work.

are locked (the windows are barred), and the patients have no means of calling for outside help. And to allow the nuns to go round quicker a piece of cardboard with a capital R (meaning "recommended") or an A (meaning "administered") \* is pinned at the foot of the bed, so that the nun can stop to see if the patient wants anything, or is dead, in which case the body will have to be removed at 5 a.m. Thus you see in the mortuary rooms bodies showing, by the position in which they have stiffened before their death was noted, what pain, despair, and want of a merciful hand they have suffered in their agony!

The reporter explains that the infirmiers and infirmières (lay nurses) are only servants in fact, as they have to attend to the heating and lighting of wards, the making of beds and cleaning wards, w.c.'s and spittoon cups, and other work which ought not to be accomplished by nurses! To say the truth, these coarse servants are called upon to do many more things for the patients—all kinds of irrigation, minor dressings, changing clothes, &c. They always give bed-pans, enemas, and get tips that vary for all these attendances, as also for bringing water to wash, and for combing the patients. It is commonly said that combing and enemas cost each 0.50 c. (5d.) and the bed-pan 2d., the basin of water 1d. . . . Nuns know it; but they say it is impossible to prevent this abuse, and when patients are too poor to pay—well, they wash with their lemonade or remain dirty and their hair awfully entangled. A white cap is poised upon it when visitors are expected or when they are sent to the operating theatre; it soon gets knocked off, and the hair which has not been plaited is everywhere. . . .

The reporter declares, though, that the lectures which the nuns have attended for a few years have had good results (?), and that it is a year now since a real school has been established (???) under the direction of a "professeur agrégé de la Faculté." To my knowledge it is another sample of the established error—lectures and no training.

But Dr. Durand proposes some improvements as to the lay nurses: that they should no longer be mixed with the other servants; that they should be obliged to attend the lectures regularly and pass examinations every now and then; that there should be three divisions for them, and they should be made to pass from one to another according to the marks given by . . . the visiting doctor.

The reporter, though, will not hear of a diploma (or certificate) being given to the hospital staff or pupils from outside attending the lectures. He considers that the nurses should be allowed to lodge in town so as to enable them to marry, thus facilitating applications. Finally, a pension ought to be granted them after twenty-five years' service and sixty years of age.

He then takes up the Prime Minister's *Circulaire* on nursing schools, and again vehemently opposes the diplomas as being likely to induce nurses to practise medicine unlawfully or give a right to those who, having attended lectures, will set up as nurses many years after having forgotten all they knew. He also thinks that nurses belonging to a hospital staff would, on getting the diploma, expect to get the better posts, even if they prove perfectly

\* "Administered" means that the patient has been through the obligations of the Church, and may die without further trouble.

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