

her, which completely soaked her clothing. Having no change of garments, she could only dry the outside at the kitchen fire and cover up deficiencies with another gown. As might have been expected, she caught a severe chill and an attack of follicular tonsillitis ensued, which nearly terminated her hospital career.

Well do I remember being once hurriedly sent off duty from the ward on account of a sore throat and isolated in "Jemima" without a single possession; the night superintendent, who happened to be an old friend, came to the rescue, and lent me night-gear, as it was impossible to get anything from King's Square until after the disinfection of my property!

Then, too, one was always compelled to go out in the same dress that one had worn in the wards, no matter what cases one had been attending or where one wished to go for one's off-duty time; a very serious disadvantage if one's friends happened to be up from the country and staying in an hotel where the management did not exactly welcome the advent of a nurse.

No; there may be theoretical reasons why a Nurses' Home should be at a distance from the wards, but experience only emphasises the other side of the argument. If we found it hard with the extra allowance of time in the morning, what would have been the case if our work had begun with that of the hospital-boarded probationers an hour a-half earlier, and if the modern principles of asepsis had been carried out and we had been obliged to change our dresses before appearing in the wards? So far I have only dealt with the question from the nurse's position, because I can speak from this standpoint with experience, but there is much also to be said against the proposition from an administrative and economic standpoint.

It is evident that the scheme would be needlessly expensive, not only involving, as your correspondents point out, "duplication of dining and dressing rooms with the necessary maids," but also an increase in the nursing staff itself for the time taken up in the daily walk to and from the hospital, and the subsequent dressing would have to be deducted from the hours on duty in order that the nurse be not obliged to rise earlier or go to rest later than at present. Were it to be otherwise, I feel sure that in very many cases the last straw would be added to the nurse's burden, and many a breakdown would ensue.

Again, speaking as a Matron, I consider it distinctly desirable for purposes of discipline to have the nurses' quarters under my own immediate supervision.

Yours faithfully,  
HELEN TODD.

Matron, National Sanatorium, Bournemouth.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—The decision of the Governors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital to build the new Nurses' Home at a distance from the hospital would be received with great regret, I should imagine, by all who are responsible for the comfort of the nurses, and, through them, for the well-being of the patients under their care.

Unless the hours on duty of the nurses were considerably lessened, I think they could not undertake the extra labour entailed in living at a distance without causing their work to suffer.

It seems to me that, should it be impossible to

have the new Home inside the hospital gates, the Governors would have to face the question of employing additional staff, both nursing and domestic, and thus incur further expenditure, if the patients are to be as efficiently nursed as heretofore.

I am, dear Madam, yours faithfully,

ELIZABETH J. MATTHEWS.

Fountain Hospital, Tooting Graveney.

[We are compelled this week to hold over other interesting letters on this subject, which we shall publish in subsequent issues as space permits. The consensus of opinion is overwhelming as to the desirability of retaining the Nurses' Home in close proximity to the Hospital.—Ed.]

## Practical Points.

**Bacteria in Water.** It is not pleasant to think that intestinal bacteria are to be found in the water which we drink. Yet

Dr. Klein, a bacteriological expert, has shown that in regard to the Lambeth Company's filtered water, bacteriologically examined, 50 per cent. of the samples contained intestinal bacteria in 10 cubic centimetres or less, and 30 per cent. of the samples contained intestinal bacteria in one cubic centimetre or less. It would, therefore, seem to be of importance that all drinking-water, whether previously filtered by a water company or not, should be boiled before its consumption.

**A New Horse Ambulance.** A new horse ambulance, to be stationed in the neighbourhood of Holborn, has been built in the United States for "Our Dumb Friends' League."

The order was placed in the United States because the British carriage-makers invited to submit a model carriage had one and all declined. The new conveyance when closed appears to be an ordinary covered van, with a crank that might pass for a brake on the near side close to the driver. For practical purposes there is a sliding floor that can be pulled out in the rear, so that an injured horse can walk up or, in severe cases, be lifted on and then rolled up into the van by means of the crank. "Our Dumb Friends' League" was the first society to introduce an ambulance of the kind in this country, and it desires to provide one for every Metropolitan borough.

**Benefit of a Bread-and-Fruit Diet.** Dr. Haig points out the advantages of a bread-and-fruit diet in the high-blood-pressure group of uric acid food poisonings, which used to be considered special diseases under the

names of epilepsy, neuralgia, asthma, Bright's disease, &c. The great point in the relief of these troubles is the blood pressure, which cannot be brought about with a milk diet on account of the large proportion of fluid contained. By cutting down the fluid to the smallest amount compatible with comfort, and feeding on breadstuffs, dried fruit and fresh fruit, nuts, &c., a blood pressure of 150 to 160 mm. of mercury can be reduced in a week or two to one of 120, with a corresponding improvement in all the symptoms above mentioned. This diet not only reduces the blood pressure, but eliminates also the source of the uric acid poisoning.

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