

Nursing Echoes.

- * * * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



Now that the Camberwell Infirmary has opened its new wards there is an opportunity for women who are seeking posts as probationers to enter its nursing-school for training. This Infirmary is one of the finest of our new State Hospitals, and as the nurse training-school is excellently organised, the opportunity is one of which many will no doubt desire to

now avail themselves.

The Southampton Infirmary Committee has reported upon an examination for nurses recently held at the Infirmary, and stated that they wished "to emphasise the very satisfactory result of the examination, and that this is due to the instruction given by the Medical Superintendent, Matron, and Assistant Matron."

The late Mrs. Frances Henderson, of Sussex House, Kew, left by will £500 to each of her two nurses. This form of appreciation of good work is very encouraging.

In several cities district nurses are permitted to travel free or with half fares on municipal tram lines when in uniform. This appears to us a most sensible and philanthropic concession on the part of city councils, and is, no doubt, greatly appreciated by the nurses—first, because it enables them to give constant attention to the sick poor, and secondly, because no more healthy and delightful kind of recreation can be enjoyed by tired nurses than a good blow on the top of a tram during times off duty. Well do we remember the endless pennies spent by us when a Sister at the London on journeys to Stratford and back in our "two hours off" when feet were much too painful to be trifled with by walking one unnecessary step.

We hear constantly of the difficulties of well-trained Superintendent Nurses in Workhouses in maintaining discipline amongst the ill-educated and turbulent women, who by some means make this field of nursing their *metier*. Any attempt to have the work thoroughly well done, or, in some instances, done at all, to insist on punctuality, discreet conduct, and good order, appears to be insolently resented by these loud-tongued women, who at once appeal to the Guardians and pose as ill-used

martyrs, in consequence of which the Guardians usually reprimand the Superintendent Nurse for want of tact, and make her work impossible, or ask her to resign, and leave a free hand to the rebels. We are always glad when the Superintendent Nurse has the courage to refuse to resign. Otherwise, there would be very little hope of improving the care of the sick and defenceless poor.

The account of an inquest on a child, aged five months, who died at the General Hospital, Wolverhampton, after scalds from a bronchitis kettle, affords food for reflection. According to the evidence, the child was admitted to the hospital on December 20th suffering from pneumonia and bronchitis. On December 27th it was scalded, and died a few hours later. The hospital was represented by a solicitor and the House Governor. The nurse in charge of the children's ward on the night of the death stated that she placed a bronchitis steam kettle by the side of the child; this kettle had no spreader on the spout, as the one generally used had been sent to be repaired; while she was attending to another child the water in the kettle rose to a temperature that caused it to rush out of the spout on to the child, who was badly scalded. The witness, who was only a probationary nurse, added that the screw on the opening of the kettle was so tightly fixed that she could not unscrew it to fill the kettle, but had to do this by the spout. There was no indicator on the kettle to show how much water it contained. The house-physician attributed the accident to the kettle being too full, but admitted that the kettle was not a proper one. He did not think the child could have survived even if it had not been scalded. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, but condemned the use of such a "miserable kettle," and also thought that there should be more nurses employed when there were twenty-three patients in a ward.

The *British Medical Journal* says:—"It is much to be regretted that the hospital authorities should allow a probationary nurse to take charge of a large ward full of children at night. So far as we understand the evidence, this probationer had sole charge of twenty-three children at night. In these days, when the importance of well-trained nurses is being urged by the medical profession, it is unpleasant to find that hospital authorities are often the greatest sinners against this teaching. A kettle that has but one opening can only be regarded as a dangerous weapon specially constructed to eject boiling water and steam upon any person or thing within its range; the use of such an implement to supply steam for a baby suffering from bronchitis can only be explained by the deplorable ignorance of the management of the simplest domestic articles in which girls are now allowed to grow up. For this

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