

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* * * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



Before the Editor left town to attend the Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, she gave the usual instructions to the domestic staff at holiday time as to refusing admittance to strangers desirous of attending to the gas or the telephone, and then sorrowfully and as an unwelcome after-thought added to the list "unknown women in nursing uniform." The cloak of the trained nurse is alas, in these days, utilised by unscrupulous persons to cover a multitude of sins.

Under the heading "The Confessions of a Surgical Nurse," a former Staff Nurse of one of our most famous hospitals, discusses in the *Tribune* the question of exploratory operations, asserting that "the old skill in diagnosis is rare or non-existent," so an "autopsy" is performed "the operation being really experimental." If "the system rallies from the shock of the operation, a few weeks restore to perfect health." Well modern surgery can, we know, do many things, but we have yet to learn that it can restore the dead to perfect health in a few weeks. In regard to mistakes in diagnosis, and to unnecessary operations, we may point out at once that a nurse is not in a position to judge of these matters. She does not know the motives which actuate the surgeon in undertaking an operation, and diagnosis is entirely outside her province.

There is plenty of scope for nurses as reformers within the ranks of the profession in which they are skilled workers, and they will be well advised to confine their attention to that, and to refrain from amateur criticism of the professional work of their superior officers. We are glad to observe that our contemporary publishes an article by a London Surgeon embodying the medical view.

That hospital nurses can hold their own in other fields than that of their chosen profession,

has just been demonstrated by Miss Ethel Littlewood a nurse at Kingston, who has beaten the swimming record in the Thames recently established by Miss Clair Parlett.

In connection with a long-distance swim by members of the Kingston Ladies' Swimming Club in which seven ladies took part, Miss Littlewood started from Sunbury Lock at 9 a.m., and did not leave the water until she reached the Isleworth Gates of Kew Gardens at 8 p.m. She had then swum 16 miles, and been in the water for 11 hours. The powers of physical endurance thus shown should stand the swimmer in good stead during her nursing career.

Nurse Prussman, of the Hayfield Infirmary, successfully defended herself against an imputation of neglecting a patient at a recent meeting of the Hayfield and New Mill Board of Guardians. In reference to an allegation that a patient had been neglected she attended the Board meeting and said that she would be glad to know in what way the patient had been neglected. The Master, Mr. W. Parsons, said that he had no charge to make against the nurse. His contention was that the man should have a male attendant—that a male attendant should have been in constant charge of a dying man. He then proceeded to describe the man's condition. The nurse said the description given by Mr. Parsons only showed that he did not understand nursing matters. His statement of the case was not borne out at all. This was supported by the medical officer.

The Chairman said he had spoken to the patient in question, and he had always been most obliged for the kindness and attention he had received from the officials.

Mr. J. Turner, J.P., thought it was Mr. Parsons' duty to make an apology.

Mr. Parsons said that there was never a thought in his mind to say anything against the nurse, and he never implied it. So far as he had seen he had always found the nurse attentive. He would withdraw anything she might have taken as an imputation against her, but he certainly considered there should be a wardman to attend to the sick.

The Chairman said that was a question not for the master, but for the doctor.

On the proposition of Mr. William Jowett, J.P., seconded by Captain Wilks, a vote of confidence was passed in the nurse.

The Mayoress of Bridgwater (Mrs. H. W. Pollard) recently made a presentation at the Town Hall, to the Hon. Mrs. Stanley, wife of the ex-member for the division, when there

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)