

ing Staff of the British Lying-in Hospital, Endell Street, W.C., and their friends, by the Matron, Miss Banks, was a great success.

From the provinces and from Scotland and Ireland come also accounts of happy Christmas gatherings in which everyone from the Committees, and the Matrons and Resident Staffs right down to the ward maids—to whom the sweet cleanliness of our hospitals is largely due—contributed their share of work and goodwill.

The Nursing World, and more especially the Matrons of the Hospitals under the Metropolitan Asylums Board, are anxiously awaiting the decision of the Local Government Board as to the position of M.A.B. Matrons. It is to be hoped that when the Board meets in the middle of January that some definite decision of the L.G.B. may be announced.

We regret to learn that there is not a sufficient supply of well trained certificated nurses entering the service of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, so the ill-considered action upon its part of attempting to degrade its Matrons was a very suicidal policy. The London Fever Hospitals are now very crowded, and until the Local Government Board has made public its decision on the nursing question, we hope no good nurse will hesitate if wishful to enter them to do so. The reasons apart from the recent controversy why the senior nursing posts under the M.A.B. are not popular are the conditions of service—(1) The title of Sister should be substituted for Charge Nurse; (2) these Sisters should be privileged to come on duty a little later in the morning; and (3) their salaries should be raised. After the grind of general training, rising usually at 6 a.m., a certificated Charge Nurse deserves some concessions as to service and salary.

It is always pleasant to record the well merited appreciation of good work, and the colleagues of Miss K. E. Richmond, the able Matron of the Hospital for Women, Sparkhill, Birmingham, will learn with pleasure that on the termination of ten years' arduous work there she has received a letter signed by all the medical staff recognising the value of that work, and expressing the hope that at the conclusion of another ten years they may again be able to offer their thanks and congratulations. A handsome gift is to follow. Miss Richmond, who is a member of the Matrons' Council, is held in high esteem by her own profession, esteem which is evidently shared by members of the medical profession

who have had the opportunity of judging of her work and administrative capacity.

The Ipswich Nurses' Home, of which Miss Newton is the indefatigable and popular Lady Superintendent, accomplishes no end of work in the year, through its various branches of Private Nurses, District Nurses, Cottage Helps, and in the Nursing Home. The District nurses are thoroughly trained, possessing full qualifications after three years' experience, and the useful class of worker who look after old people, less acute cases, and do the domestic work in cottages are called Cottage Helps, not Nurses. This is just all round, and the example set by the Ipswich Home should be adopted by the Holt-Ockley and County Nursing Associations. No work is menial, and all good work is honourable, but trained nursing is a skilled profession, and a distinction should be made between trained nurses and those who are not. This is only honest.

When a village worker is a midwife, and not a trained nurse her legal status empowers her to use the title of "certified midwife," and she should not be deprived of her title by the lay committee which employs her. After 1910 a village midwife will become indispensable, and why not encourage well educated women to appreciate such work at its true national value.

Considering the dozens of patients who have died through drinking poisons in hospital wards, we should have thought the precautions making such occurrences impossible would by now have been in force in every well managed hospital and infirmary. This counsel of perfection has not, however, been yet attained.

On the afternoon of Boxing Day (during the temporary absence of the nurse) Rose Currie, a single woman, aged 54, who was a patient in the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, was seen to get out of bed, make her way to a table in the ward, and take a hearty drink from a bottle of disinfectant, which was used by the doctors for washing their hands after attendance upon the patients. An emetic was administered, but the woman gradually got worse and died. At the inquest on Saturday it was stated that it was a general practice in hospitals to keep disinfectants and other poisons used for external application upon a table in the wards, and that for convenience, owing to frequent use, a bottle of disinfectant had been kept in the Liverpool Workhouse

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