

night. The Hospital is badly under-staffed, and recently the Matron asked for an increase of twenty-three officers as follows:—

One Home Sister (there is a large nurses' home containing 84 rooms).

A second Night Sister.

A Matron's Store-keeper (the Assistant Matron has now to do this work).

Seven Staff Nurses for day duty.

Seven Staff Nurses for night duty.

Three Day Probationers for relief duty.

Two Night Probationers for relief duty.

One Receiving Ward Nurse. (This work is now done by the porters).

And until this number is provided it will be impossible to work the Infirmary with any degree of efficiency. Indeed, the number of Sisters should be largely increased. At present each Sister (save one) has a whole pavilion to look after, each pavilion consisting of three wards, one above the other, with small wards and day-rooms attached on each floor.

Moreover, there are no porters for work in the Hospital. The male epileptics carry coals, etc., and the probationers have to wheel the trucks to the kitchen to fetch the patients' dinners. They also have to take all soiled linen to the laundry, and fetch milk, bread, etc.

These things have been pointed out to the Committee, but few reforms have been made. The Visiting Medical Officer, who is, unfortunately, a "ratepayer" for the district, considers the Infirmary fully staffed, and that the nurses are tumbling over one another!

The Clerk usually vetoes expenditure of money on the Hospital, and the only man (a Resident Medical Officer) who realised the over-work of the nurses, and urged reforms, has been got rid of, and treated in a scandalous manner, though legally the Committee acted within their rights. The fact that both the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet* refused to advertise the post, and the Guardians are unable to secure the services of a medical officer speaks for itself.

The second Resident leaves this week. The fact that the British Medical Association has taken the case up will undoubtedly lead to reform.

The present unsatisfactory condition of affairs is the more to be deplored as the Hospital is well built, and there is no reason why it should not take its place as a first-class Poor-Law Training School, and nothing less should satisfy the Local Government Board.

I am, yours faithfully,

QUALIFIED TO JUDGE.

[Our readers will wonder what the Local Government Board is about to permit the Guardians of the Hope Hospital to continue their mis-government of the institution. One has but to calculate the number of nurses to patients in well-nursed hospitals to realise that the nursing staff at Salford are wickedly over-worked, and the patients under-nursed. The President of the Local Government Board, as a working man, should inquire fully into this "sweating" of nurses' labour, and that without delay.—Ed.]

FREE WILL, NOT SELF WILL.

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

DEAR MADAM,—As a guest of the Lady Mayoress at the Mansion House last Thursday, is it permissible to criticise her most kind and well-meant little speech to the Territorial Nurses? I should appreciate being permitted to do so—of course, quite in the spirit in which she spoke. The Lady Mayoress, a thorough believer in the ability of her sex, and herself an ornament of it, is evidently a little afraid of what our next step may be, and advised us to consult with fathers, husbands, and brothers. Now, as one who owes everything worth having in life to her mother—to her generous instincts, self-denying courage, confidence in her child, and sound good sense—I feel like speaking up for her. But that by the way. My case is, I know, not singular. An affluent youth—and just as I was growing to womanhood, financial losses in the family; the best of fathers, who resented the imputation that "he could not keep his own women-folk"—a mother and three young daughters. Then financial worry, and the determination upon my part to turn out and earn a living. A very strong inclination to become a hospital nurse, determinedly opposed by the best of fathers. How was I to act? In opposition to my own inclination and self knowledge, or on the advice of one I loved, but in whose wisdom I had not confidence? Ultimately, in opposition to advice I entered a hospital, found my vocation, and did well in it. I earn £100 a year, and for many years, like the Irish pig, have paid the rent of the little home to which my parents have retired. My two sisters are also breadwinners—one as a girls' school housekeeper, salary £25, the other wearing out her young life as companion to an old lady, salary £28, from which very little can be saved in the one case owing to holidays, in the other to expenditure on dress.

One of the happiest results of my self reliance is that when the call came I was able to place my skilled services at the disposal of my dear country should they be needed, to be enrolled in the Territorial Nursing Service, and thus be in a position to help the fathers, husbands, and brothers of other women less happily placed. The truth is, that women as wage-earners, have come to stay, and many, like myself, contribute to the education, home keeping, and divers necessities of members of their families, and it is right that such women, who are not being supported by men, should realise that it is their duty to judge for themselves. Only the rich can afford to be dependent.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

A MEMBER OF THE TERRITORIAL
NURSING SERVICE.

Notices.

OUR PUZZLE COMPETITION.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page xii.

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