

of teaching, are left to the care of those, who, however willing and enthusiastic they may be, are of necessity incapable of imparting the further detailed knowledge required. An occasional visit from a qualified official from headquarters will certainly not be sufficient to train Voluntary Aid Detachments in the most elementary knowledge of hospital routine. The two trained nurses who are to form part of every Voluntary Aid Detachment will arrive on the scene of action much too late in the day, according to the present plan, to do anything but make the best of existing arrangements. It is the organisation of the temporary hospitals, large or small, which must be in the hands of trained women. Others can render invaluable aid in arousing the interest of the people, explaining the scheme to them, getting up Ambulance and Nursing classes, and taking charge of the financial business, etc. They cannot determine the amount of surgical and medical material needed, say for a hospital of 40 beds—the number of cooks, cleaners, laundry women, porters—the amount and kind of food necessary for sick people—the general stock to have ready—the sanitary arrangements necessary, and all the innumerable details that we as trained women alone understand. It is not an easy matter to discipline and organise the laity, rich or poor, sufficiently for them to be of use in time of war; but it can be done if undertaken by those who from their training and experience know what will be needed, and how to make the best use of our material and environment while there is time to do so.

We must not, unless the scheme is to fail utterly, trust to vague promises of help coming at the eleventh hour from headquarters, presumably the War Office.

Faithfully yours,

LUOY NETTERVILLE BARRON,
Member Leicester Infirmary Nurses'
League.

Cranborne Corner, Ascot.

LECTURES ON NURSING BY NURSES.

MADAM,—May I explain, in answer to the letter signed "Elizabeth Brunning," in your last issue, that I do not doubt that there are a number of doctors who can lecture well on nursing, and that in London and other large centres the St. John Ambulance Association can command the services of the best.

But in the country the supply of good medical lecturers is limited, and yet the rule holds good, making it impossible to take advantage of good nurse lecturers who may be available. And although nurses in full work have, no doubt, as you correspondent says, little time for lecturing, there are plenty of qualified nurse health lecturers, and occasional retired or partially occupied nurses who would be perfectly competent and willing.

I have received the enclosed unsatisfactory answer from the St. John Ambulance Association, which may be useful to publish.

I am, yours faithfully,

E. L. C. EDEN,
Central Organiser, Nurses' Social Union.

St. John Ambulance Association,
St. John's Gate,
Clerkenwell, E.C.,
7th April, 1910.

DEAR MADAM,—In reply to your letter of the 5th instant, I beg to inform you that no exception can be made to the fundamental rule of this Association that the lectures in "First Aid" and "Home Nursing" should be given by qualified members of the nursing profession.

Yours faithfully,

P. G. DARVIL-SMITH,
Ass. Sec., Territorial Branch.

Miss E. L. C. Eden.

[This letter is not very clear. The fundamental rule of the St. John's Ambulance Association is that lectures on First Aid and Home Nursing shall be given by members of the medical profession. Presumably this rule was adopted when trained nursing was practically non-existent. It is now obsolete, and should be abrogated.—Ed.]

SISTERS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I think that one of the reasons why Sisters come short of the standard expected of them by Miss Butler is that such a multiplicity of duties is required of them that it is impossible to perform them all adequately. The systematic instruction of probationers is too important a matter to be placed upon the head of a busy ward.

By no means every Sister is qualified to teach. I grant that she ought to be, and when our nursing education is more systematic, perhaps it will be a requisite qualification for promotion to the position of Sister for a nurse to be required to demonstrate her ability to do so, but if a Sister supervises the domestic arrangements of her ward, both as to cleanliness and economy, assures herself that the duties of the nurses and ward maids are properly performed, that the patients are comfortable, that medical directions are carried out, notes any changes in the condition of the patients, goes round with the staff twice a day or more, if the hospital is a medical school sees that everything is duly ordered for the visits of the students, orders and serves the diets for each patient, sees and corresponds with the friends, and does a multitude of other things besides as they crop up, is it reasonable to expect her to be an efficient teacher of theoretical nursing as well? Sisters' duties are not often defined. I think, if they were, that hospital authorities would find that they expected for £30 or £35 a year more than it is in mortal woman to perform.

Yours faithfully,

A HARASSED SISTER.

Notice.

OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

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

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