

The Nursing Journal of India, discussing editorially Miss Fox's "First Lines in Nursing," says:—

"While we are in a hortative mood there is one other thing in a little book which is reviewed elsewhere in our pages, and against which we wish to protest. Miss Fox says in her 'First Lines in Nursing,' that the pupil nurse should always call the doctor 'Sir.' We feel sure that there can never be the proper relation of intelligent co-operation with the doctor, on the part of a nurse, if she is taught this domestic servant attitude. There must be respectful formality between doctors and nurses for the sake of ward discipline and the greater ease of the patients and the nurses in what would be otherwise trying ordeals. But to put into the mouths of nurses an expression which no other woman uses except a menial for her master is certainly more than any doctor would wish to require of a woman, who was fit by education and natural capability to learn to help him with his patients. This suggested practice may not differ materially from the regulation in force in some hospitals in America that the nurse shall always stand to write the doctor's orders, but somehow it seems more servile. Such an admonition might have been appropriate to such nurses as those to whom Miss Nightingale wrote in 1872, pupils' some of whom had had very little schooling, and did not easily read or write,' but it should not be required of educated young women to-day."

We shall be pleased to hear opinions on this question. "Sir" is a title of respect—not used alone by domestics to their employers, but in many well-disciplined professions from a junior to a senior officer. It is in this sense that it is used in the relations between the medical officer and nurse, and helps, in our opinion, to maintain good discipline in a ward. It is not so long ago that children treated their parents with marked respect, and sons addressed their fathers as "Sir." We think no hardship would result from a little more reverence from youth to age in these free-and-easy times.

CHRISTMAS IN THE HOSPITALS.

In the civil hospitals throughout the country Christmas Day was observed as usual, nothing being omitted which added to the happiness and enjoyment of the patients. Entertainments of a comic character are not taking place this year, but everyone rightly felt that so far as the patients, and especially the children, were concerned, no difference should be made—therefore everyone worked with right goodwill to bring as much brightness and happiness into the day as possible. Many wards were beautifully decorated, and from the reports which have reached us, and which we regret we have not space to print in detail, the enjoyment was

general. Of course, toasts at the nurses' tables were general, "The King," "Our Allies," "Our Brave Defenders," being the most popular.

In regard to the Military and Territorial Hospitals, the authorities and the medical and nursing staffs combined in their endeavour to make the day one to be remembered by the sick and wounded within their walls. In all of these the Christmas cards sent by their Majesties the King and Queen gave great pleasure, and in many instances each man had quite a pile of gifts besides. It was the aim of the nursing staff to provide for each one some article which would be of real service when he returned to the trenches, and many were the mufflers, socks, gloves, and other woollies, besides smokes and other gifts which each patient found awaiting him on Christmas morning.

THE POOR LAW INFIRMARY MATRONS' ASSOCIATION.

At the Annual Meeting of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association, held at Chelsea Infirmary, the following Resolution was carried, and subsequently forwarded to the President of the Local Government Board through Miss Barton:—

SIR,—The Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association beg to be allowed respectfully to draw attention to the following points in connection with the lamentable suicide of the Superintendent Nurse at the Barnet Workhouse Infirmary—points which the Association has already attempted to lay before the Local Government Board both by letter and by deputation, viz., the difficulty, and sometimes impossible position, in which the Superintendent Nurse in unseparated Workhouses is so often placed when she has not the control (under the medical officer) of the nurses and nursing, and her authority with the nursing staff is overridden by the Master.

The Association would also point out, what was reiterated in many of the letters forwarded by them to the Local Government Board, the need that is often felt by Superintendent Nurses, of some power of *direct appeal* and for the hope of support in cases where, under great difficulties they are earnestly striving to do their duty faithfully and uphold the best nursing standards. The local power of the Master is very great, and if his views on nursing matters and those of the professional nurse do not coincide, she has often for the sake of peace to submit to petty tyrannies or else lower her nursing ideals and give up her position as head of the nursing staff.

The result is that too often the best and most suitable women will not undertake these positions, and the sick poor therefore are the sufferers.

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