

constitute the Matrons representatives of the 'best interests of the nurses' or, indeed, representative of the Poor-Law in any other capacity except that on whose behalf they are chosen. Is it possible to contend that in the matter of 'standing' any better method can be devised than one of selection by the nurses themselves for whom 'representation' is desired? We neither question in any way the experience nor the ability of the three Poor-Law Infirmary Matrons; if this were in any sense lacking they would of course not occupy their position. Nor can it be doubted that the Council or promoters of the College of Nursing enjoy full liberty of action in the choice of their representatives. This, however, should ensure for the Poor-Law nurses a similar liberty in the choice of theirs. The principle of representation as connected with the nurses, and especially with Poor-Law interests, is vital in this matter. The Council of the College of Nursing, which is, as yet, a private body, is seeking statutory powers. Boards of Guardians, however, are public bodies, who through public enactment represent the whole public and are charged with the care of its interests within their own areas. We can conceive it as little other than a grave omission if in these circumstances the public interest is relegated to a secondary position."

APPOINTMENTS.

MATRON

Royal Infirmary, Gloucester.—Miss Florence Tillson has been appointed Matron. She was trained at the London Hospital, and has been Sister at the Hospital for Women, Liverpool; Assistant Matron at the Ophthalmic Schools, Brentwood; and Housekeeping Sister at the General Hospital, Swansea.

The Raymead Children's Hospital, Maidenhead.—Miss K. Josephine Speirs has been appointed Matron. She was trained at the Northern Hospital, Manchester, and has been on the Private Nursing Staff of the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, W.C. Ward Sister, Superintendent-Sister and Home Sister at Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton; Matron of the Westmoreland Sanatorium; Lecturer on Hygiene at the Darlington Training College; and Matron of the Bleakdown Auxiliary Hospital, West Byfleet. Cert. Royal Sanitary Institute.

SISTER.

Charing Cross Hospital, W.C.—Miss M. V. Helmore Wood has been appointed Casualty Sister. She was trained in general nursing at Charing Cross Hospital, and in Children's Work at the Victoria Hospital for Children, Chelsea Hospital, S.W.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S IMPERIAL MILITARY NURSING SERVICE.

Miss C. R. Hammond to be Staff Nurse; Sister Miss E. A. Harvey resigns her appointment (August 16th).

NURSING ECHOES.

The question of the working hours of nurses is one which from time to time is ventilated in the daily press, not generally by nurses themselves, but by someone who knows the condition of labour in other professions, and is struck by the unfavourable comparison between the hours on duty of the average nurse and of the industrial worker.

The question is not so simple as it appears at first sight for various reasons. In the first place, the sick must be nursed for the twenty-four hours round for seven days a week. The hospital nurse cannot "down tools" from mid-day Saturday to Monday morning. Laws which apply to industrial workers are not applicable to the organization of the work of nurses, and the practical method to adopt is that the average number of working hours for a month, shall be decided upon, to ensure that though the continuous service of the sick is maintained, the total hours on duty for an individual nurse shall not exceed that amount. It will be found quite possible, in institutions, to conserve the interests of the sick and to deal justly with nurses, by a fair arrangement of off-duty time daily, and half-days and whole days at intervals.

The trouble here, as usual, is one of finance. Shorter hours for individual nurses mean the employment of a larger staff; therefore more expense in the matter of salaries, and in the provision of accommodation for the nursing staff. Consequently when things appear well on the surface, the question is apt to be shelved by employers of labour, while it is difficult for employees, especially those in the position of pupils, in training, to take effective action to voice their views.

In regard to certificated nurses outside institutions, the dominant factor is once again the needs of the sick. Whatever may be said for an eight hours' day (which is not the same as an eight hours' shift) for nurses in institutions, it is impracticable in the case of private nurses. A nurse goes into a house where a patient is acutely ill, and to deal effectively with the emergency is her first consideration, though in the interest of the patient she must have a certain number of hours off duty out of the sick room. To provide for the adequate nursing of the sick person it may be necessary for a second nurse to be engaged, but in many households the expense of even one trained nurse is a very serious one.

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