

that never—although sometimes the provocation is very great—do the attendants at asylums permit themselves to show anything in the nature of cruelty towards patients. The reason for many of the stories of ill-treatment is to be found in the delusions to which the patients themselves are subject. . . .

“Infinite tact, patience and sympathy are required for the vocation of an asylum nurse. In my opinion it is a great thing to spend one's life trying to bring comfort into the lives of the poor people who enter asylums.

“Like many others in the same walk of life, I loved my work, loved my patients, and look back on my life as one well spent.”

A district nurse's refusal, on the ground of professional etiquette, to give evidence in an assault case, led to her appearance at Montgomery Police Court last Saturday on a charge of contempt of court. She had ignored a summons to attend, and had been arrested on warrant and detained at the police station overnight.

Asked if she was prepared to face the consequences of her refusal, she firmly answered “Yes,” and was sentenced to one day's imprisonment.

We have not sufficient evidence before us to know the nurse's reason for her attitude, but we think the ground of “professional etiquette” where justice is concerned must not be carried too far by members of our profession, and no nurse is justified in rendering herself liable to imprisonment for contempt of court.

The Irish Nurses' and Midwives' Union are giving publicity to the system, which they consider undesirable, of the running of institutions for the sick by religious. The Union points out that many of the Sisters are not thoroughly trained, and that at St. Columcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown, and at other hospitals, the whole of the night nursing is performed by lay nurses, which they consider unfair, as their health often suffers from the continued strain, and they express the opinion that all positions in the public service should be open to those having the necessary professional qualifications, and, if members of religious Orders choose to compete for nursing posts, they should be prepared to undertake all nursing duties and take their share of caring for the sick on night as well as day duty.

Apart from the question of religion, there cannot be two opinions on the justice of this

claim, and we hope permanent night duty for lay Sisters will be discontinued in Irish hospitals nursed by nuns. To exact it to the injury of the health of others cannot be inspired by that self-denying ordinance which should be the basis of all true religion.

Our American mail always provides an uplift. From a letter from a great nursing educationist we cull the following:—“I cannot begin to tell you how distressed and disappointed I am that the long warfare still continues, and that so much precious time and energy must be spent in contending against unnecessary obstacles to progress. There is so much to be done in nursing, in every aspect of our work in fact, to bring it up to true professional standards that the waste of valuable effort now does seem grievous. The nursing situation here [in the U.S.A.] is steadily improving in one or two most important directions. There is a marked increase in the number of well-qualified women entering our better schools. Old Bellevue, mother of all our schools, admitted one hundred students in one class in September, a ‘very promising group,’ the Superintendent of Nurses thinks, and the tendency is similar, in so far as the good schools in cities are concerned, all over the country. There is also a rapidly increasing demand for teachers in Nursing Schools. We cannot keep up with it at all, and more than a hundred such positions could not be filled with trained teachers this year. What a wonderful field this is for nurses who are women of education and with suitable personal qualities. I think we must centre more effort in trying to prepare nurses for this interesting and vitally important work. I can hardly think of anything I would like better than to be a really well-trained teacher of nurses.”

The life of this great and modest lady is one long lesson to her colleagues all over the world. Would that we had such a “teacher” in nursing ranks at home!

A plaque in commemoration of Nurse Cavell was recently inaugurated in Christ Church (the Anglican Church in Brussels), the unveiling ceremony being performed by Mr. George Potts, President of the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium.

Miss Isabel Macdonald will, by invitation, address the Scottish Nurses' Association on Saturday this week at their Annual Meeting to be held in Glasgow.

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