

industry in this country has been estimated at £30,000,000. The loss from disease among laying birds in England and Wales has been calculated to be £4,000,000 a year. Fowl paralysis is common amongst the diseases which cause heavy losses.

The new method of keeping hens in rows of small one-bird cages with wire-netting floors known as Hen Batteries, is responsible for much of the disease and loss now afflicting the poultry industry. These Batteries are housed in any sort of place, in backyards, sheds, old barns—anything can be converted into a Battery hen house. There are also large premises in which 1,000 or 3,000 or maybe 4,000 hens are kept in close confinement. According to a letter recently received from the Ministry of Agriculture, "the Battery method of egg production has become a widely established commercial practice in the poultry industry in this country."

Birds thus imprisoned are condemned to an utterly unnatural life; they are never in contact with earth and grass; they are deprived of those powers to move which are essential to the health of all living creatures. The hens are made to stand on sloping floors, which allow the eggs to roll into receptacles for collection. This unnatural and cramped position cannot but have an injurious effect on the health of the birds. Internal organs suffer; breast blisters due to the wire-floor are common. Many Battery hens suffer from mites, inflamed mouths, fowl pox, tumours, diarrhoea, visceral gout, etc. The eggs produced are deficient in vitamins; they have been found to contain meat spots, blood clots, treacle yolks, floating yolks, green tinged whites and mould growth. Many Battery eggs are totally unfit for human food.

The cruelty of the system is apparent to anyone who has an idea of the natural life of farmyard fowls. Humanity in the treatment of laying birds is not only compatible with profitable production; it is hygienically necessary.

Yours faithfully,

L. LIND-AF-HAGEBY, *Hon. Director.*

#### CLEANING AND POLISHING, WASTE OF TIME FOR EMERGENCY NURSES.

GENERAL HOSPITAL,  
NORTHAMPTON.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It made me smile the other day when I read that Mr. Walter Elliot, Minister of Health, had appealed to trained Nurses to help in the training of his emergency aids for war time. He goes out of his way to belittle the Nursing Profession on every possible public occasion, and his appeal at the College of Nursing was only another of his tortuous methods of trying to show the trained nurse as merely a cog in his glorious machine.

On looking through the instructions issued to Matrons of Hospitals on the training of these auxiliaries, I note that they—"The Central Emergency Committee for Nursing Services"—state as follows: "It would therefore be a waste of time to set them (nursing auxiliaries) to those routine ward duties such as cleaning and polishing, which rightly form part of the basic training of a student nurse." This Committee is another body set up by our appealing Minister of Health on which the working trained nurse is conspicuous by her absence, and thus—in these enlightened days of the Inter-Departmental Report on Nursing Services—do these leisured ladies comment on the modern training of nurses!

Student nurses neither clean nor polish, except those items near to the patient's welfare, and what more shall we require from these auxiliary nurses? Judging from the long list of things these auxiliary ladies require to be taught, there will be no time left to train the student nurse, never mind treat her as a glorified charwoman.

There is no need for those who sit in high places to appeal to the trained nurse to do her best on these occasions. Every trained nurse in the country always does her best as a matter of course, and because it is her duty.

Perhaps the Minister of Health will one day realise that the trained nurse is his most important woman worker in either war or peace, and will treat her with the respect and consideration she rightly deserves.

Yours faithfully,

S.R.N., S.C.M., D.N., *Matron,*  
*Northampton General Hospital.*

#### KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

##### Emergency Aids.

*A Matron* writes:—"I have been sent a syllabus of the privileges 'emergency aids' are to enjoy at our expense in this hospital—which would require a couple of Sister Tutors at least to instruct these ladies of leisure. We Matrons are working at high pressure in hospitals—short of Nurses and of domestic helpers, and it is quite impossible to train superfine young persons, who apparently are to enjoy the cream of nursing and leave untouched the skimmed milk. I enclose a copy of the curriculum the trained women are expected to teach 'emergency aids,' who, no doubt, will then proceed to become 'Assistant Nurses' at our professional expense."

##### She May Want to Marry.

"It appears to me that the present policy of the Government in relation to efficient nursing is suicidal. There is a serious shortage of probationers—now termed Student Nurses, who have to sign on for three or four years training—and surely many of the applicants now being enrolled by the Central Emergency Committee, and the Red Cross will be content with short cut training as suggested by the latter body, and tend to swell the Assistant Nurses and not become regular probationers—I have met one young woman already who intended to become a regular who now admits the short term training will suit her very well 'as she may wish to marry.'"

##### Why Commit Suicide?

"I meet middle-aged nurses with no need to work, evidently devoid of all knowledge of political economy, running up and down the country urging Registered Nurses to cut their own throats."

##### The Debate in the "Commons."

"I took your advice and have studied Hansard's report of the discussion in the House of Commons on April 18th on the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report. Its futility and ignorance on Nursing as a profession are amazing—but until the Registered Nurses themselves are better instructed in their own affairs the situation seems hopeless."

##### Nursing Standards Defence Funds.

Both the R.B.N.A. and the B.C.N. are sharing the attempt to protect the rights and privileges of Registered Nurses. Small contributions gratefully received, to Secretary, 194, Queen's Gate, S.W.7; or to Secretary, 19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7.

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#### PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR JULY.

What steps would you take in an emergency to check bleeding in the following circumstances:—(a) After operation for hæmorrhoids; (b) Along the track of a draining opening in the abdomen; (c) Ruptured varicose vein?

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