

are the references to cases suffering from that rather rare condition known as hyperparathyroidism and the discoveries and operations in connection with it. Nursing has indeed evolved since the days to which Sir Robert Hutchison referred when he said that the only thing necessary to the making of a good nurse was "a kind heart and a pair of list slippers."

We have interesting descriptions of Miss Black's experiences in Australia, novel experiences they are, some grave, some gay. The writer introduces us to many different aspects of life there, not all of them relating to her own profession, but the chapter we like the best in this part of the volume is that which deals with bush nursing.

Altogether Miss Black has written a very interesting and readable book ranging, in its quality of variety, from the quiet places of Ireland to the island Continent, and from the slums of London to the Royal Palace. There are many illustrations, all good, which add much to the interest of the volume.

F.B.C.N.

#### Nothing worth while is Achieved with Ease.

In correspondence with Sister Catherine Black, she writes: "It is kind of you to notice my book and to wish to give it publicity in your fine journal.

"The book is an effort to show that a nurse's life need be neither dull nor uninspiring; hard and strenuous, yes; but nothing really worth while is achieved with ease. If the really splendid young people of to-day could only see it."

We feel sure "King's Nurse—Beggar's Nurse" will inspire those who read it, with admiration for the finest profession in the world—and let us hope make many converts to its ranks.

## BETTER CONDITIONS FOR NURSES.

### REFORMS RECOMMENDED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND.

As we go to press we have read with the keenest appreciation the Circular issued by the Secretary of State for Scotland addressed to Local Authorities in Scotland as annotated in the *Scotsman* of July 27th. It will appeal to the group of Registered Nurses in England, who so strongly disapprove of those recommendations by the Athlone Committee which would in their opinion degrade the nursing profession in England.

It is to be hoped the members of the English Departmental Committee will read, mark and learn the Circular issued by the Secretary of State for Scotland and realise that it is equally applicable to England and Wales.

#### CIRCULAR TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Reforms which would make nursing a more attractive profession and stimulate recruitment are urged on Local Authorities in a circular which Mr. John Colville, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland, issued recently, through the Department of Health for Scotland. A similar circular, referring to conditions in England and Wales, has been issued by the Ministry of Health.

The reforms include the need for better accommodation for nurses, the releasing of nurses from domestic work, the elimination of unnecessary restrictions, proper arrangements for ensuring adequate leisure, four weeks' holiday per year, and improvement in food.

The suggestions made in the Scottish circular are based on the Report of the Scottish Departmental Committee on Nursing (presided over by Lord Alness), and the Report of the Committee on the Training of Nurses (presided over by Sheriff Black).

Other recommendations made by the two Scottish Committees concerning finance, salary scales, the training of probationers, and superannuation are at present under consideration.

#### Up-to-Date Nurses' Home.

The Committee's reference to the erection in recent years by many hospital authorities of up-to-date nurses' homes, where each nurse can have a separate room, and where the amenities of social and communal life are provided, is noted in the circular, which goes on to state: "The Committee appreciates the difficulty of making this provision in the older hospitals, but they suggest that, as one method of solving accommodation difficulties as well as making the nursing profession more attractive, more consideration might be given to the possibility, in favourable local circumstances, of allowing trained nurses to live out. Where such a system is adopted, adequate lodging allowances should be paid."

The suggestion that authorities should give consideration to the possibility of employing married nurses more widely than at present is quoted from the interim report of the English Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

After stating that probationer nurses should live in the nurses' home, the circular refers to the Committee's recommendation that these homes should be as "home-like" as possible, and that they might be detached more fully than at present from the hospital premises, and run as a hostel under a warden.

#### "Cheap Domestic Labour."

"The Committee urges consideration of the extent to which nursing staff can be relieved of domestic duties which can be performed by ward maids or orderlies," the circular continues. "This would not only release nursing staff for their proper duties, but would remove the reproach frequently levelled against training hospitals that probationers are used as cheap domestic labour."

On the subject of discipline, the circular states that the evidence given to the Committee revealed considerable dissatisfaction with the many restrictions to which nurses were frequently subjected, and many of the witnesses urged the creation of a more homely atmosphere. It was freely agreed that, especially during duty hours, discipline was essential for the proper conduct of hospital nursing; but it was represented that restrictions were still imposed in some hospitals which were inconsistent with the responsibilities which nurses were called upon to assume, as well as unnecessary for the maintenance of discipline. "The Committee accordingly makes certain suggestions," the circular goes on to say, "which, if adopted, would bring the policy in regard to discipline more closely into conformity with modern conditions. The Committee also deals with the question of ward discipline, which is under the immediate control of the sister in charge, and, having in view the control wielded by those ward sisters, recommends that great care should be exercised in the selection of nurses for these posts."

#### Holiday Arrangements.

Admitting the inevitable difficulties in hospital nursing with regard to the arrangements for off-duty, the Committee pointed out that many hospitals found it possible to construct timetables in advance so as to give nurses proper notice of their off-duty times. The Committee suggested that this policy should be extended to all hospitals, and, in addition, that probationers should, if possible, be relieved of all hospital duty for a week or two before an examination. So far as possible, lectures should not encroach on off-duty time but should fall within on-duty time.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)