

"She has, however, no powers of command over any other officer or soldier unless such other officer or soldier is specially placed under her orders by a regular officer of at least the rank of major."

But the sting is in the tail of this article.

The General expresses the following opinion:

"But there is one innovation of which I strongly disapprove, and that is grant of commissions to members of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

"This grand service owes its origin to Florence Nightingale. She went to the Crimea in 1854 and was the pioneer of nursing in the Army. She showed that this service of nursing could only be satisfactorily performed by women, because nursing means much more than dressing wounds and giving pills. Nursing in its widest sense is essentially the occupation at which women excel and at which men can, at the best, only hope to be poor imitators.

"Nursing, therefore, is quite unlike service in the W.R.N.S., A.T.S., or W.A.A.F. It is not a duty which can be performed equally well by men and women. It is essentially the woman's rôle.

"It is very sad to me to feel that the admirable atmosphere of a military hospital or of a casualty clearing station should have changed by reason of the matrons, nursing sisters, and staff nurses being commissioned officers."

We can but hope that Lieut.-Gen. Sir Douglas Brownrigg will find the atmosphere of a military hospital even more admirable when matrons and sisters realise their status as commissioned officers. It is now just 55 years ago (1887) since we first wrote to the senior medical officer at the War Office and petitioned for military rank for military nurses—a suggestion which was treated with incredulous amusement.

Some people wonder why we have not yet won the war!

Yet another Circular has been sent out by the Ministry of Health stating that it has been represented to the Minister that it is desirable for hospital authorities to arrange, as far as possible, that nursing auxiliaries who have general experience in hospitals should perform work appropriate to their experience. This object would be attained if matrons of hospitals kept official note of the number of red or blue stars awarded to auxiliaries and indicated them in the official lists which they keep, or post upon notice boards.

Presumably this means these "stars" claim professional promotion in the wards. We pity the matrons, who are surrounded, and no doubt, dazzled, by these constellations!

After years of wicked waste of petrol, provided by the risk to life of our sailors, petrol is rationed so far as "the people" are concerned. The removal of 300 taxis from the London streets at one fell swoop has resulted in a maximum of inconvenience to travellers arriving at the main London railway stations after black-out. For nurses this is a very serious matter, and unless they can carry their baggage to a bus (if there is one), they cannot fulfil their professional engagements. A fortnight ago, after a 10-hours' journey from the north, we arrived at Euston in darkness. A polite guard informed us there were no taxis in the yard, and not likely to be any. The alternative would be to sit on a trolley until daylight!

And then we heard a kind voice inquire:

"Where do you want to go to?"

"To Queen's Gate," we replied, realising that the inquirer was in naval uniform.

"The Navy is here." The prospect was reassuring, and a coincidence.

"And so do I," he replied. "Perhaps we might share a taxi?"

"Indeed, yes. With pleasure."

In the yard not a taxi to be seen, so the "Navy" went out into the streets, and with difficulty secured one.

And so safely to Queen's Gate, with sincere gratitude.

Now Scotland Yard has taken up this matter of public inconvenience, and it is to be hoped the Home Secretary will be compelled to deal with the muddle which should never have occurred.

A reminder of Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War was presented recently to Mr. W. J. Cumber, chairman of the Farmers' Club, in acknowledgment of the sum of £1,000,000 raised among farmers for the Red Cross.

The gift was an exact replica of Florence Nightingale's lantern. It was handed to Mr. Cumber by the Duke of Norfolk, who is president of the Red Cross Agricultural Fund. The lantern does not harmonise with that shown in most drawings and paintings of the Lady of the Lamp. It is five-sided and without windows, and it is carried by a long chain.

Mr. Cumber's lantern, fitted with an electric lamp, will be lit during meetings in the club's board room.

The news of the sudden death of Princess Tsahai, younger daughter of the Emperor of Abyssinia, at Lekempti, on August 17th, was received in England with sincere sorrow. The Princess, who was 22, studied nursing at London hospitals and qualified in England. Since her return to Abyssinia last year, she had organised the hospital services there, and her devoted work was a real asset to her country. She had been married less than four months to Colonel Abby Abbaba, through whose influence maybe the pioneer work of his young wife may be continued.

The Emperor fully appreciated her qualities. In appointing her husband Governor of Lekempti, the richest province in Abyssinia, he had meant to give her scope to apply all that she had learned here for the benefit of the Abyssinian people.

A memorial service for the Princess was held in the chapel of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, W.C., where she began her training, on Wednesday September 9th.

## THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING.

### THE DEGRADING OF THE NURSING PROFESSION.

As we go to press, the Report of the Nursing Reconstruction Committee, Section I, The Assistant Nurse, has been issued by the Royal College of Nursing.

We deeply regret to observe that Lord Horder, the Chairman, has, in a Foreword, given support to what, in our opinion, is the inevitable degrading of the Profession of Nursing.

As this matter is of vital importance not only to Registered Nurses but to national health, we shall deal with it at length in our next issue.

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