

THE MALE NURSES' JOURNAL.

The Society of Registered Male Nurses now issue an instructive little journal, and we were interested in the following expression of opinion by Mr. J. Ford Wright, R.M.N., which appeared in the September issue, with much of which we agree.

WHAT IS A NURSE?

The modern tendency to set up groups and watertight compartments within the general structure of a profession, trade, or organisation, appears also to have become firmly established in the nursing profession. We have a General Nursing Council which caters admirably for this line of thought with the introduction of Lord Rushcliffe's Report. The various sections of the nursing world are even more segregated, all of which is for the ultimate good of the patients and nurses.

The special nurse really does exist theoretically, but in practice, no such person could be produced.

The mental nurse receives an intensive training in mental diseases, and the nursing of these diseases, but he or she also spends a considerable period of the three years' training in acquiring the wide knowledge of general diseases and the nursing thereof. Even surgical nursing is not neglected, and much time is given to the technique of handling cases of typhoid and other fevers. The same might be said of all other so-called special nurses.

However, when does one ever see or hear of special nurses being credited with having any general nursing knowledge or the ability to apply it?

Journalistic accounts of modern mental hospital treatment go to great length to describe the very latest shock therapy, or the wonders of psycho-analysis, but never do they give the slightest indication that a mental hospital is usually provided with a well-equipped operating theatre and that surgical operations do, in fact, take place.

When a mentally sick patient becomes also afflicted with some physical illness, there is no general hospital waiting to receive him. He must of necessity be nursed in his mental hospital.

What would the position be if the mental nurse's training was so specialised and insular as it is popularly reputed to be?

The mental nurse must also be prepared to become a dental nurse once a week upon the visit of the hospital dental surgeon.

In Scotland the approach to the treatment of early mental disease is slightly different from the English attitude, inasmuch that very many more early mental cases are received and treated in the observation wards of the large general hospitals. These wards are usually staffed by nurses who have had general and maybe fever training before acquiring a mental certificate.

Personally I feel the nurse who has acquired all available certificates is the special nurse, as he or she is surely a specialist of nursing.

Oh, happy day when we can have only nurses trained in every branch of the profession, as no one type of nursing can have a clearly defined boundary; so much overlapping must occur.

A Word for All Time.

And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not pinched in a corner, nor towards fleeing before a revolution, but redeemers and benefactors, pious aspirants to be noble clay, plastic under the almighty effort, let us advance, and advance on Chaos and the Dark.—EMERSON: *Essay on Self-Reliance*.

NURSING ECHOES.

Sister-Tutors are on the crest of the wave since they plucked up courage to condemn the prescribed curriculum for Assistant Nurses proposed by their Committee affiliated to the General Nursing Council. The fact is that any young woman persuaded to enter the service by Public Assistance hospitals under the two-years' curriculum prescribed is being deluded. Such candidates should be directed to train as regular students in well-organised Nurse Training Schools and become Registered Nurses, instead of wasting their time and being exploited by public authorities, the majority of whom are ignorant of what skilled nursing means.

At last the various authorities employing Sister-Tutors have awakened to the fact that these officers should be properly trained for their responsible duties. The G.N.C. is defining standards and taking action. The London County Council Committee proposes that the description "qualified" be added to their title, and that salaries should be adjusted on this basis, the rule to apply to male as well as female tutors.

Although war-time restrictions have held up many "aids" needed by sightless people, the National Institute for the Blind has managed to introduce a number of devices for their efficiency and comfort.

Blind typists need no longer be bothered by the annoyance of "writing on air" beyond the bottom of the paper. This is prevented by a ridged backing sheet which jams the roller at the right moment. For learners, the Institute has issued an embossed metal chart of the standard keyboard.

Experiments have been completed on an improved Moon writer, a micrometer for use in engineering, a pocket Braille writing machine and letter scales. Two new carpentry guides ensure accuracy in dovetailing and chiselling.

War-time innovations for blind Patience players include a playing board, new types of embossed cards and a Braille book of games. A simple outfit to be issued shortly will enable domino players to make their own pieces.

Up to the end of September, the National Institute for the Blind had registered 155 British civilians who have been blinded by enemy action in the present war. Among them are 32 victims of flying-bombs. Other cases are under investigation but have not yet been put on the official register. The 155 casualties do not include war-blinded members of the civil defence services.

Every girl loves a sailor, so the Merchant Navy Comforts Service, which has undertaken the following additional activities, is sure of support.

Helping the Merchant Seamen's War Memorial Society's convalescent and holiday home at Limpsfield, Surrey; and co-operating with the Society in building houses for aged or war-injured seafarers.

Assisting in rebuilding and re-equipping the premises of the Sailors' Home and Red Ensign Club, Dock Street, London. The cost is estimated at £250,000.

Aiding in modernising the property and facilities

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)