

o every 13 beds on an average. This is indeed a step in the right direction, and is an example which it would be well for other institutions to follow. We are always reading of the physical strain which a woman must undergo during her training in a hospital. I don't recognise the necessity. Mentally a Nurse's work must and should be an enormous strain, because, during the absence of the medical man, she is responsible for the lives of her sick fellow creatures. This is no exaggeration. Have I not seen them—scrupulous in cleanliness to save life—carelessly cut dressings on a dirty table, and so destroy it?

The coat should be cut according to the cloth. Let the nursing be done by the Nurse, the cleaning by a domestic staff. It is useless to add to the number of new Probationers in a ward, in the hope of improving the nursing, so long as the duties remain disorganised, and the Nurse is scullion and student in one. Poor patients! how often have I heard the answer given to a request for attention by a busy Nurse: "I'm sorry, No. 10, but you must wait; this dusting, or scrubbing, or sweeping must be done by prayer time." One ward maid to each 13 beds, what an Elysium! The Hospital in which I was trained was divided into enormous divisions of from 35 to 60 beds; one ward maid only was allowed to each division. Talk about sweating and white slavery, it made one's heart burn to watch the poor creature at her cruel drudgery. Many a time I have said, "Never mind my tables, Ann—or my lavatory, or crockery; I have a little spare time; I'll give them a little extra attention to-day," and so relieved her of a portion of her terrible burden. From 6.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. this poor woman seldom sat down, and for this fourteen hours' hard labour she was paid 10/6 per week and her dinners; and as she had six fatherless children to feed, it can be estimated what amount of nourishment she was able to provide for herself whereby to fortify herself for her superhuman task. The following are a few

of her chief duties:—Five large fireplaces to polish, fires to build up and keep going; two monster lobby boilers to polish and keep full; twelve tables to scrub; two large lobby tables; sixty oil cloths to wash; sixty lockers to scrub (weekly); brasses to polish; four lavatories and w.c.'s to keep clean; crockery for sixty patients to wash; six great dinner tins to scour and polish; two large milk tins to scour and polish; one bath room and bath to clean; one scullery to keep clean; lobby, about 20 ft. square, to scrub; Sister to wait on—and so on *ad infinitum*.

If you can do anything, dear Mr. Editor, to lessen the work of these long suffering women, do use your influence. Of course, our patients suffered, because no human being could accomplish the Herculean task; and below the surface the wards were filthy, and, in consequence, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and suppurating wounds were by no means rare.—Yours,

"THOROUGH."

#### A PROTEST.

Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, 24th December, 1892.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—In the book called "How to become a Nurse" I find misstatements regarding the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and the Aberdeen Hospital for Sick Children. I should be glad to hear from whom the authoress obtained the information she has there given. In both cases, the statements about wages and hours on duty are exceedingly incorrect.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

RACHEL FRANCES LUMSDEN,  
Honorary Superintendent.

[We cordially sympathise with Miss Lumsden and with other correspondents in their complaints of the many incorrect statements made in the book to which Miss Lumsden refers. It is written by a Miss Honor Morten

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