

## THE NURSING MIRROR.

Communications for this column should be addressed The Mirror, care of the Editor, 38, Old Jewry, London, E.C.

### A LAUDABLE AMBITION.

I AM glad to see that someone has taken up the question of certificates for nurses. I feel sure there are many who would be very glad to be able to get them, even if it did give them some little trouble and expense. In these days of competition a certificate is necessary if a nurse is ever to be promoted, and surely that is the ambition of a great many? Their employers could speak for their practical knowledge, while *The Hospitals Association*, by having an examination, could find out about the theory. Then, if they are satisfied that there is a good knowledge of both, a certificate might be granted; and if there are many uncertificated nurses situated like myself, they would think it a great boon. At present there is only one way of getting a certificate; that is, by going into hospital as a probationer for a year, and paying a guinea a-week. Surely these are rather hard lines for experienced nurses who have been in the work for years, and have valuable experience both in hospital, private, and district nursing that many certificated nurses have not. I have been an interested reader of *THE HOSPITAL* ever since it was started, but this question of certificates for the deserving non-certificated is interesting me deeply, for it seems to open out a valuable sphere of usefulness and good work second only to the "Pension Fund" itself.

### AN UNCERTIFICATED NURSE.

#### PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

ARE private nurses from well-known institutions, trained for such institutions at well-known hospitals, who have proved excellent nurses, to be considered unfit for "trained nurses registration" owing to their not remaining three years probationers? Should the strain of private nursing prove injurious to the health of any, would their returning to hospital work before having "served their time" unqualify them, provided they hold good testimonials from doctors and matron? Are there not as many really good nurses (practically and theoretically) not holding examination certificates as there are with them? Does the working for an examination place the theory first?

A CONSTANT READER.

## THE EDITOR'S LETTER-BOX.

### THE OSWESTRY HOSPITAL SCANDAL.

WILL you kindly permit me to correct a sensational paragraph respecting the rules of the Oswestry Cottage Hospital, evidently supplied by some highly imaginative correspondent? In the first place, the hospital rules are *unlike* the laws of the Medes and Persians in that they can be, and are, altered whenever the committee sees sufficient reason, and relaxed at once when the special urgency of any case requires it, though it is true that they are neither altered nor relaxed to suit the private whim or convenience of any individual. Next, the child, instead of being brought here to be dressed, which would have been done at once, was brought by its mother, after being dressed at home by a doctor, who told her to take it to the hospital, which she did against her own judgment, as she knew the rule very well. Whether taking a three-year-old child from its mother and keeping it with strangers in a strange place would be likely to "soothe" it, I leave to the judgment of anybody who knows young children. As to the burns, which I dressed myself the next day, they were only such as would be treated in the out-patients' department of any hospital. Neither the non-existent hall-porter nor the non-resident chairman of committee can be held responsible for an occurrence of which they were equally ignorant. The matron, who is held up to reprobation, was at that very time lying dead in the hospital, and the sister who was doing her work had in her own grief and the care of the hospital enough to bear without the addition of a gratuitous worry, which no one possessed of common human instinct would have chosen that time to inflict on her.

M. MATTOCKS.

Oswestry Cottage Hospital, Feb. 6th, 1888.

[We are glad to receive this quite satisfactory explanation.—Ed.]

### IS THERE ANY HELP?

"Y." WRITES: Can you give me any information as to what institutions would be likely to admit the following case?

A child of six years old has been an idiot from her birth, and can neither stand, walk, or speak; she is blind with one eye, and is in all ways as helpless as an infant. I have already applied to the Earlswood Asylum, the Asylum for Imbecile Children, Darenth, and the Western Counties Asylum, Starcross, Exeter; but she is not eligible for any of these.

[Can any of our readers suggest a suitable institution for the reception of this case?—Ed. T. H.]

### DIFFICULT CASES.

I AM anxious to know the addresses of homes which would be likely to help in the following case: An illegitimate child—a girl—is now in a country workhouse. The mother is a person of very bad character, who, if she removes the child, will be certain to bring it up as ill as it is possible to conceive. The age of the child is only four—too young for the "waif and stray" homes. No payment can be made. Are there any homes which could help under the circumstances?

J. WILSON,

Hon. Sec. Workhouse Nursing Association.

45, Colville Gardens, W.

[We shall be glad to hear of a suitable place for this worse than orphaned child.—Ed. T. H.]

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

WITH reference to Questions and Answers, "Hospitals for Incurables," (page 325 of *THE HOSPITAL* for 4th inst.), the Longmore Hospital, Edinburgh, admits patients free by the selection of the committee, and persons in receipt of parochial assistance by arrangement with the parochial authorities, on payment of a small weekly board. We have also private rooms for patients who can pay board—£52 for a whole room; £35 for a half-room.

J. T. MACLAGAN.

6, North St. David Street, Edinburgh.

### HINTS ABOUT BREAKFAST.

FEW circumstances better illustrate and prove the essential conservatism of the English middle classes than their uniform and universal custom of eating bacon for breakfast. The pig, though a very unclean animal in a state of nature, has been vastly improved by civilisation—more perhaps than some of his masters—and is now as much a part of the culture and taste of the age as Liberty's silks or Mr. Grant Allen's agnosticism. Nevertheless, it is as possible to have too much pig as it is to have too much of Mr. Grant Allen's superiority and inconsequence. An occasional change for breakfast, extending even beyond the range of fish and kidneys, would be highly conducive to health, and serviceable as a means of retaining the palate in a high state of critical efficiency. The Americans have something to teach us in this respect. They do not think *bacon* the cardinal and fundamental article of breakfast-table faith. They even go outside the region of the animal world altogether, and substitute the produce of the cornfield in a variety of forms. The A B C breakfast cereals, of which samples have been sent to us by Mr. B. Lampe, of 44, Great Tower-street, are highly suitable for breakfast dishes for "all sorts and conditions of men"—including women. They consist of different forms of prepared white wheat, white oats, barley, and yellow maize. There is no doubt that all these cereals differ considerably from each other in ultimate composition, and that the occasional substitution of one for another in succession is of advantage to the digestion and general nutrition of the animal organism. We have personally tried them all, and can speak with confidence of their thorough palatability and wholesomeness. For children they are to be emphatically recommended; and as there is some want of variety in food for the senior nursery, mothers will do well to purchase samples, and prove for themselves how many different pleasant compounds can be made out of them. Invalids, who are always pleased with a new food, may try the A B C cereals without fear of dyspepsia or other unpleasant result. But whilst these foods are eminently suited to invalids and children, they are, as we have said, equally adapted to general use for adults of all ages and circumstances. If housewives could be persuaded to introduce them at the breakfast-table once or twice a-week, instead of the inevitable *Wiltshire* or *Yorkshire*, the pig might enjoy three or four months of added pleasure in the sty, and everybody's digestion and temper be correspondingly improved. It is proper to add that these cereals are decidedly cheap.