

age. This is not the case with her English sister, and, with money tending downwards to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., I do not see how anyone can lay up for the future. It is becoming increasingly difficult to get qualified teachers to enter families—the isolation, the monotony, and the want of freedom are so much disliked; and the exceeding difficulty of her position socially, and the many petty vexations incident to it, are keenly felt. More and more those who desire good and stimulating teaching are beginning to feel that, for their girls as well as their boys, they must seek good schools. The private tutor system has been superseded by the latter. A grandson of the Queen is now a pupil at the Charterhouse.”

* * *

MISS WINIFRED DICKSON has won the first prize in the Junior Osteology Class of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

* * *

THE EMPRESS MOTHER OF CHINA is evidently a clear headed woman. She has recently been expressing her views as to the culture of her son, and the mode of government, as follows: “The Emperor is now advancing to manhood, and the greatest respect he can pay to us will be to discipline his own body, to develop his mind, to pay unremitting attention to the administration of the Government and to love his people. Let not the present method of paying respect to us be made an opening for the gratification of future ease and enjoyment. It is our heartfelt hope that the Ministers of the Court will vie with each other in checking extravagance and in securing the attainment of good government.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

* * * We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our Correspondents. Brevity and conciseness will have first consideration. See notices.

To the Editor of “The Nursing Record.”

SIR,—In answer to “Sister Mary's” enquiries concerning the preservation of potted flowers, &c., in a hospital ward, speaking from personal experience, I should like to say that it is only by constant attention to their well-known requirements, cleanliness, warmth, and fresh air, that they can be kept fresh for any length of time. First of all, it is necessary that the pots should be sufficiently large; then each plant should be removed from the ward during the night, placed in the bath or day room—and if of the fern tribes they must be hardy specimens—well watered, and they will generally be found quite fresh in the morning. Palms and india-rubber plants, which are the most serviceable for ward decoration, should have each leaf carefully sponged every morning, and be returned to the ward clean and free from dust. With this treatment these plants will last for years. Nothing is more cheering and beautifying in a sick room than

cut flowers, artistically arranged; but they must be supplied with fresh water and be carefully picked over every day, as they speedily become dowdy and offensive.

“SISTER FLORA.”

To the Editor of “The Nursing Record.”

SIR,—As one of the lookers-on, who proverbially see most of the game, I should like to add my *quota* to the lively discussion concerning the “National Pension Fund for Nurses,” as it is erroneously called. I do so as a disinterested person and a detester of shams. If the fund is a commercial speculation, founded on a financial basis—as I gather from the Actuary's pamphlet in reply to the *Lancet's* statements—and is for the use of all hospital officials, male and female, why not at once honestly and openly state the fact? It would then only be fair to the nursing profession that the company should at once change its title, and be known as the “Hospital Officials' Sickness and Life Assurance Society.” It would then be understood by the public at large, and by nurses in particular, that there is no element of charity in the scheme, and those that are so inclined can put their money into it without feeling aggrieved that they are not to receive more than their money's worth.

The fact that secretaries, clerks, dispensers, &c., are eligible to join the fund should be placed very distinctly before the generous public, who are to supply the bonus fund, and who in contributing to the National Pension Fund for Nurses naturally imagine that their money is to be utilised solely for the benefit of a hard-working and very deserving class of women, the nature of whose work prevents them continuing it beyond fifty or fifty-five years of age.

“THOROUGH.”

To the Editor of “The Nursing Record.”

SIR,—I have before me a pamphlet widely circulated during the past week by the Council of the National Pension Fund for Nurses concerning what is termed “the misleading statements of *The Lancet*.” In it the actuary states that “females are subjected to a much lighter rate of mortality than males, and necessarily the premiums for annuities to them must be higher.” Now, Sir, it strikes me very forcibly that Mr. King has entirely overlooked the fact that he is drawing up tables for *nurses of the sick*, a class of women amongst whom mortality is acknowledged by statistics to be *higher than amongst any other class of female workers*; and that under these circumstances the male premiums should be fixed at nearly *one-sixth* less than he female is a flagrant injustice to nurses. I would ask any reasonable being whose chance of life is the best—the hospital secretary and dispenser, with his six to eight hours' duty, with his weekly holiday from two p.m. on Saturday to nine a.m. on Monday, and his airy suburban home; or the hospital nurse, from matron to probationer, who is usually on duty from ten to fourteen hours daily, Sundays included, working in vitiated air, at great mental and physical strain, and who even in our general hospitals inevitably comes in contact with every form of disease—diphtheria, scarlet and typhoid fever, blood-poisoning, &c.—and, if working in a Metropolitan hospital, may get a sniff of country air once a month? The large proportion

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)