

and proposes that the Senior Resident Medical Officer should manage the Nurses instead. I think that there should certainly be a right of appeal from the Matron's judgment granted to every Nurse; but surely this should be to a managing body, not to an individual—but the Nurse must not feel surprised or aggrieved if she finds the Managers placing full confidence in the opinion of a woman generally of mature age and much experience in managing Nurses, and often accepting her reasons as sufficient without any very close inquiry. The relation between Nurses and Matrons is generally an extremely happy one. The Matron's position is that of undoubted head. She is generally much older than the majority of the Nurses, and there is no personal rivalry or conflict of interest between them. The Matron wishes to keep the staff together, and tries to make the Nurses happy; she wishes to get promotion for those working with her, and tries to imbue them with her own ideas on Nursing politics. In many Hospitals the Nurses look on the Matron as their best and surest friend. But if one of the Residents were in charge of the Nursing Staff the whole thing would be changed. The family feeling would naturally at once disappear. Heart-burnings and rivalries must be plentiful, and if a young man between twenty and thirty be ever so wise, so highly principled, so just, I should still doubt his power of judgment between a young woman and an old one, a pretty one and a plain one, one with agreeable or one with disagreeable manners. The writer of the article goes on to say he "should be called on to decide upon points relating to the intimate working of the Nursing Staff." The vast majority of Hospitals are not like such great Institutions as Guy's, with Dr. Steele, a man of undoubted wisdom and judgment and great experience, at the head of it. But the Senior Resident, nine cases out of ten, is under twenty-seven. Are such young gentlemen really the people to decide the intimate working of a large body of women? Have they, with the best will in the world, the ripe judgment, the balance of mind, the sympathy and the discretion that most of our Matrons possess? It is a very serious question, and such an article as the one you quote is liable to sow the seeds of insubordination and dissension in many a Nursing Home.

The greatest and wisest woman I ever knew once said to me, "Unless the women will obey a woman there is no spirit of obedience in the house." And many years of working with women has shown me the truth of her words, and also that unless there is a spirit of obedience present the spirits of peace and discipline and gentleness will not dwell there either.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, A MATRON.

[We most gladly welcome our correspondent's views on the "other side," particularly so as her letter has travelled many thousands of miles before reaching us.—ED.]

THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—“John Bull” and “F. G. Richardson” are evidently not much behind the scenes at the London Hospital, or they would not express indignation and surprise at the Committee of this Charity attempting to hush up the disclosures recently made public before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. From the printed evidence I gather that the Committee have, either through ignorance or weakness, permitted the Matron to systematically break the bye-laws of the Hospital, and it would be adding cowardice to their other shortcomings were they to desert her at the present crisis. Having been a Hospital Matron, and knowing how difficult it is for a body of gentlemen who only meet once a week to overlook any detail of the Nursing Department, and how easy it might be for an official who was so disposed to aim at and acquire unlimited personal authority, I will do the London Hospital Committee the justice to say that I think it must be through ignorance alone they have been misled. But if they have

neglected their duties in the past, they have still a great duty before them to perform; that is to grant to those governors who are not satisfied with the present state of affairs a full and sufficient inquiry into the accusations which have been brought forward.—I remain, Sir, faithfully yours,

A LATE LONDON HOSPITAL NURSE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—There is one very important item in the evidence given by Miss Lückes before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, that it would be well to bring before the public who subscribe to the London Hospital. She stated that she did not approve of Nurses on the Private Staff receiving any percentage on their earnings, but at the same time acknowledged that her own salary received a substantial addition because of her work as Superintendent of the Private Nursing Staff. When the public recollects that the Committee have appointed one of the numerous "Matron Assistants," at a large salary, ostensibly to manage the private nursing arrangements, and that the Nurses sent out are only receiving salaries ranging from £12 to £28 per annum according to their experience, they will doubtless consider, as I do, the large share received by the Matron a somewhat unjust division of the spoils.—Your obedient servant,

A LATE SUBSCRIBER TO THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

COMPETITIVE PRIZE ESSAY. NINETEENTH COMPETITION.

A Book or Books of the value of One Guinea will be awarded for an Essay as under:—

"Given a country town of 2,000 inhabitants most of whom are of the labouring and agricultural classes, you, a thoroughly trained Nurse, are suddenly called upon by the Vicar and leading Medical Practitioner of the place to organize a District Nursing Society for providing Nurses free for the poor (and also for the more wealthy resident, who of course pay for the Nurses' services when requiring them), and the Vicar and Doctor are able to guarantee from friends £150 per annum certain, and it is believed that altogether £500 a year can be secured in donations, contributions, &c. Now what would you do, and how would you do it, giving also details of estimated receipts and expenditure, &c.?"

RULES.

1.—Contributions must reach the Editor, at the office of THE NURSING RECORD, addressed as follows:—"Prize Essay Competition, THE NURSING RECORD, St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, London, E.C.," not later than Monday, September 29th, 1890.

2.—Manuscript must be written distinctly in ink and on one side of the paper only, upon not less than 24 nor more than 48 pages of ordinary-sized ruled sermon paper. The pages must be numbered and fastened together.

3.—The real and full name and address (stating whether Miss or Mrs., of the Competitor must be inscribed on the back of each contribution, and notification of which Hospital or Institution the Competitor has been or is attached to.

4.—Trained Nurses or those personally associated with Nursing work only allowed to compete.

Winners in previous Competitions are permitted to compete, but in case of a "tie" the prize would be awarded to the Competitor who has not secured a prize before.

The decision of the Prize Essay Editor to be final, and any infringement of the above Rules will be considered a disqualification.

NOTICE.—The Prize Essay Editor will not undertake to return MSS. unless accompanied with a sufficiently stamped addressed envelope; and in no case will he be responsible for any loss of same during transmission, &c. In no case must manuscripts be rolled up when sent by post; they must be folded.

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