

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—It is with much regret I see the suggestion of "Chiffon" to introduce into our professional paper a weekly letter on the fashions. It seems to me the NURSING RECORD ought to be just what it is, a journal devoted entirely to our profession, and I, for one, have always felt it an immense relief to be able to take up a paper edited by a woman, and written for women, and yet escape the eternal discussions on the shape of a sleeve or the colour of a bonnet. I think we all appreciate the increased size of the NURSING RECORD but I believe many of us would regret its valuable space being used for hints on fashion, which would I believe lower the standing now taken by our professional paper.

Yours truly,
F. M. H.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—May I be allowed to express an opinion on the subject of a fashion column in the NURSING RECORD? It seems to me the professional tone of the paper would be lowered if such were the case.

Surely "Chiffons" could easily get one of the numerous fashion papers if she wished. In private Nursing, one usually gets them; I find most households take one at least.

Trusting you will excuse my taking up your time, and with many thanks for our most useful and interesting paper,

Faithfully yours,
A. S. (Registered Nurse).

"SOUR OLD MAIDS."

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I agree with your correspondent that the new woman can afford to smile at Sir Dyce Duckworth's bogie or "awful example" threat, that unless we link our fate with one of the much over-rated sex we shall develop into "sour old maids." But I should just like to point out that the most "old-maidy" women I know are married. It is a curious fact, but the worst types of vinegary, scolding, unmotherly Xantippes are so often the so-called "happy wives and mothers," while the large-hearted maternal souls are so frequently to be found in the ranks of the so-called "disappointed old maids."

Scolding, sharp-tongued wives are proverbial. But perhaps all this means that whatever we women do must be wrong! Certainly our Nurses, whether old or young, are not by any means "sour." A man said to me the other day "You know I think you Nurses are the most attractive set of women there are." "Well," I answered, "I don't think it is because we are so pretty. We work too hard and have too much to think about to leave us time to compete in dress and looks with the average idle woman." "No," he said, "it isn't a question of features or dress; but you all look so cheerful and content that you look beautiful!"

Yours, &c.,
"A HAPPY OLD MAID."

[Wise man!—ED.]

IGNORANCE OF NEW PROBATIONERS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have had now some three years' experience in the training of probationers, and the lamentable ignorance of the raw probationer has often tried me greatly.

That girls should desire to be Nurses and enter upon their training in absolute ignorance of every domestic duty, is to me puzzling. It is surely known now-a-days that Nursing involves some domestic work. The idea of smoothing pillows as the sum total of a Nurse's duties has, I believe, exploded, although one unlucky "pro" informed me on the day of her arrival that she wished to become a Nurse because she could not stand long and expected to sit all day, and was greatly surprised and disappointed not to find the wards carpeted; but I presume such a one is an exception.

To be able to cut a piece of bread without excavating the whole interior of the loaf, to know when water and milk

boil, to understand how to beat up, boil (I dare not say poach, that might be expecting too much) an egg, to make bread and milk and arrowroot, to be able to handle a duster, and keep a fire burning, surely is not too much knowledge to expect of a new probationer, and yet in my own experience I have had many ignorant of all these matters.

To one who has made beds previously it is not a difficult matter to grasp the Hospital method of setting to work, but to one utterly unversed in beds and all appertaining to them, except sleeping in them, it takes time to master the rudiments and even to comprehend that mackintoshes are not as useful below the mattress as above it. Of course all new probationers are not so utterly ignorant, but the majority I have found so.

I presume that some time in the future when the amount of preliminary training necessary for a Nurse shall have been decided upon, such ignorance as I have described will be a thing of the past, but in the meantime it seems to me that much might be effected if each Matron would advise intending Nurses to devote an hour or two a day to getting a knowledge of domestic duties and simple cookery, which I think they would find of infinitely more service to them than the smattering of theoretical knowledge they may be striving to pick up. If thus prepared it would save them many a disaster and troubled hour, they would much sooner adapt themselves to their new surroundings, and their minds would be free to grasp their manifold duties, always bewildering at first.

To the Staff-Nurse or Sister it would be an incalculable advantage. A new probationer often takes the place of a Nurse of some experience, which of necessity implies additional work to the Charge-nurse, and willing as she may be to teach, it seems great waste of valuable time to spend hours of instruction on common knowledge which might always be acquired before entering a Hospital.

Yours faithfully,
An M.R.B.N.A.

[We hope that a Curriculum of Preliminary Education for Nurses will be defined in the near future.—ED.]

BURDETT'S NURSING DIRECTORY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—As a member of the Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association who cannot be present on the 19th inst., I am glad to see a recommendation in the report that our Association should issue a Directory of Chartered Nurses. This is the very best and most dignified method of dealing with Mr. Burdett's extraordinary interference with our professional affairs, and will, I feel sure, be a publication greatly appreciated by the members of the Association, as once a name is upon the register, no further details of professional preferment can be added, and Nurses will naturally like each year to add any steps they may have made in advance and have it notified in their own official Directory. I am of opinion, however, that it is the duty of the Council to give expression to its opinion concerning the issue of Burdett's Official Nursing Directory, because the name is distinctly misleading both to Nurses and the public. Nothing can make any such publication issued by a totally unprofessional person like Mr. Burdett, *official*, and, therefore, our Chartered Corporation owes it as a duty to its members and the public to make this point very plain to them, through the medium of our Journal and the daily press.

I am, &c.,
"MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL."

MATRONS' COUNCIL.

WE are asked to state that the first School of Method will be held on Monday, April 29th, at 4 o'clock, at the Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital. The subjects to be considered are chiefly in connection with Committee Meetings, drawing up reports, and the duties of various officers. Members wishing to be present should send their names to the Hon. Secretary, 22, Cheyne Gardens, Chelsea, S.W.

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