



## Letters to the Editor.

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

*Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.*

### "LOCAL SECRETARIES."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Several Nurses have asked me to write regarding certificates which are being granted in Sydney to women calling themselves Nurses, who, having attended a three months' course of lectures (without any Hospital experience whatever), dress, after their so-called training, in Nurses' uniform, and take cases for less than half fees, thereby supplanting Nurses who, having spent many years in Hospital and private Nursing, are now often left without one case for months.

We sincerely wish that the Royal British Nurses' Association would be established here as in Melbourne.

Yours faithfully,

"M. P.," M.R.B.N.A.

Sydney, New South Wales.

August 19th, 1895.

[Our correspondent will be interested in this week's "Nurses of Note." We hope that a Local Secretary for the Royal British Nurses' Association may be soon selected for New South Wales, as from letters received there appears urgent need for professional organisation in Sydney.

### ST. OLAVE'S INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I wish to join your correspondent "Indignant" in thanking you for your able defence of the Matron, Miss Evans. Having been a resident and ratepayer in Rotherhithe for fifteen years I take a great interest in the parish and its institutions. Your correspondent mentions that authenticated rumours are afloat to the effect that several Guardians are known as the "Tea and Muffin Guardians." I can fully corroborate the above rumour. I also see in a letter to one of your contemporaries that it is suggested that one of the Guardians is paying his addresses to a charge Nurse; if this be correct, I think it is about time that the Guardian in question should retire from his duties, or the Nurse should seek other apartments where she could invite her friends to tea.

I should like to know (if the above is correct) whether any bad feeling exists between Miss Evans and the Nurse in question? If unhappily there is, I suggest that it is possible that Miss Evans can trace the greater part of the Guardians' action towards her to this source. By all means let us have a Local Government enquiry as soon as possible, and before the twenty-four Nurses go.

"Indignant" hits the nail on the head in his concluding remarks, viz., that the Guardians are anxious for a lower grade of Nurse in place of the ladies who have assisted Miss Evans in bringing the Infirmary to its present high state of efficiency. Thanking you again for your outspoken article, I beg to subscribe myself,

"DOUBLY INDIGNANT."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—It is just a year ago since you did us such good service by presenting the injustice to which the Matron of the Lewisham New Infirmary was subjected in its true light, and

now I am glad to see you have taken up the cudgels for the Matron at St. Olave's. That hardy annual, "the Infirmary Matron's position under the Poor Law" is still an anomaly, the majority of these ladies still being expected by the Local Government Board "to make bricks without straw." You have dealt admirably in your last week's issue with the principle that the Matron of a Poor Law Infirmary must demand and is right in exercising liberty of conscience; but surely it is time that the Infirmary Matrons took concerted action concerning their anomalous position, and presented a petition to the Local Government Board, that their complaints should receive consideration and new regulations be formulated and issued for their guidance. It is an open secret that since Christmas the management at St. Olave's Infirmary has been unsatisfactory, and the good work which Miss Evans, the Matron, has effected during the past five years, is being rendered null and void. With untiring devotion she has trained a splendid staff of Nurses, and those who have visited the Infirmary wards must acknowledge that perfect order pertains in every detail, and now the invaluable services of many of these excellent Nurses are to be lost to the poor patients. Why? Because a Board of ignorant men choose to dictate concerning domestic and professional matters of which they know nothing. I cannot exonerate the Local Government Board from all blame. They know the present system is rotten to the core, and they make no real attempt to improve it. It is to be hoped the new President will make searching enquiries into the whole system of Poor Law Infirmary Nursing, and insist upon drastic reforms.

Yours faithfully,

"A FRIEND OF THE SICK."

### DOCTORS' FEES TO NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have recently seen it stated in a medical paper that a practitioner is at liberty to charge a medical man or his wife, if he attends them, the usual fee, but that such a practice is not in conformity with traditional precedent or existing general custom.

I shall be much obliged if you can give me any information as to the custom or precedent with regard to the charges which doctors should make to Nurses who are working for or with them. Should a doctor in such a case exact the usual fee, or should he regard the Nurse as a sister professional, and either forego or reduce the ordinary fees?

I am the more particularly anxious to have this question authoritatively decided, because I know of a Nurse whom I regard as having been somewhat hardly treated in this respect some few months ago. With your permission I will lay the case before the readers of the RECORD, and let them judge it on its merits.

She is a private Nurse, in very fair practice in London, but, last autumn, like so many Nurses, was not very busy. An epidemic of typhoid fever broke out in a town some distance from London, and, as she was known to one doctor there, and a few residents also, it occurred to her that she could use her energies to better account in a place where there was much work and few Nurses, rather than waste her time in London. So she accordingly entered the lists and worked indefatigably and successfully. She managed to save some thirty guineas as the result of her hard and trying work, when unfortunately she fell a victim herself to typhoid. She consulted one of the doctors for whom she had been working during the epidemic, and he attended her through her illness. On recovery, she asked him to let her know how much she was indebted to him for his professional attendance, and he sent her in a bill for thirty guineas! Poor Nurse was appalled. Here was the total consumption of the nice little sum she had saved by her enterprise and hard work. However, she made the best of a bad bargain, paid without a murmur, and returned to London. So that all her work had been for nothing, she had contracted typhoid, and by so much had deteriorated her constitution, and in addition had to pay the lodging and other expenses

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)