

taining the students in the kitchen. A woman of many years' experience, and therefore not too young, should be chosen as Sister of large Hospital wards, and under these circumstances she acts somewhat in the position of "mother" to young House Surgeons, Students, and Nurses, and they usually accord her the respect and confidence to which her position and experience entitle her. All are working together for the good of the patients, and it seems to me both inadvisable and lacking in good taste to accentuate the difference of sex too strongly in work in which it is inevitable that there must be perfect co-operation between men and women.

J. L. COULTON
(Late Sister of Mellish Ward).

QUALIFICATION FOR REGISTRATION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with interest all the letters concerning the question of altering the qualification for Registration by the Royal British Nurses' Association, and am of opinion that the higher the standard the better. But the question is one which requires very grave consideration, so that the interests of all may be advanced. The chaotic condition of the Nurse's education is quite appalling when one comes to probe it, and surely it would be wise of the Royal British Nurses' Association to go to the root of the matter, and give due consideration to the subject of defining a definite curriculum of education for Nurses, and register Nurses upon their knowledge and skill (personal character is already taken into account), and not upon vague certificates, which in many instances are not worth the paper upon which they are written. I hold a three years' certificate of a Hospital of upwards of forty beds, and upon that I can register, but when I received it I was far from being really a thoroughly trained Nurse; for instance, I had received no systematic theoretical education, and picked up my scraps of knowledge from books on elementary anatomy and physiology; there was no *system* of bedside teaching by the head Nurses, and here again I owed my little knowledge to an observant and inquiring mind. Before receiving my certificate my knowledge was not tested by examination. I am thankful to say I am a very discontented person, and as usual, feeling deeply dissatisfied with my training, as soon as I was free I set to work to get further experience, and to qualify myself for a post of responsibility. I have been fortunate enough to spend a year in a woman's Hospital, where I have gained a knowledge of nursing cases of gynaecology and abdominal surgery, and where the Matron possesses both the art and desire to impart instruction. I have spent a year as Charge Nurse in a large Fever Hospital, and lately I have gained most valuable experience in a well-ordered Home Hospital, spending my time off duty in learning cooking and massage; perhaps in the future I may be fortunate enough to obtain the position of Home Sister, where I shall have something to do with teaching Probationers on a definite curriculum. At the same time I should like to record my sincere appreciation and gratitude for the great impetus which the Royal British Nurses' Association has given to an improved system of education for Nurses, and standard of Nursing all the world over, and it is with pride that we Nurses recognise the fact that this great work has been inspired and mainly carried on by women. But the Association is merely at the beginning of its work, and it must face the fact that in the near future we Nurses shall test its power for good by asking great things of it, and it is to be hoped it will not be found wanting. The sign of these professional demands are already evinced by the Resolutions passed unanimously at the Conferences of the Matrons' Council.

Yours,
REGISTERED NURSE.

NURSES ON CYCLES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—A Practical District Nurse wishes to know the views of other Nurses as to the propriety of Nurses riding bicycles. My principles are so strongly against anything that is calculated to lower the standard of true womanliness and modesty which are so essential if we are to retain the respect that has hitherto been accorded to us, that I feel impelled to make my protest against our profession acting in such a way as to give the world an opportunity to speak lightly of its individual members.

I may be considered old-fashioned in my ideas, but I should feel *ashamed* to be classed with Nurses who ride bicycles, or in any way ape the "New Woman."

Yours faithfully,
ONE OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

BICYCLES AND NURSES' DEBATES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—In my Hospital there has been a great deal of interest and friendly discussion aroused among the Nurses about the bicycle discussion now going on in the RECORD. In fact we are thinking of starting the subject in a little Debating Society we have for our own amusement and interest. It is proposed to open discussion by contending that "Bicycling is un-Nurse-like." We have experienced some difficulty in finding a champion for this assertion, and I really believe that the Nurse who has consented to open the Debate is secretly a great upholder of bicycling and any other rational and harmless amusement for Nurses. I would suggest that it would be most interesting if several Nurse Debating Societies would take up the subject and send the results of their voting to the RECORD.

Sincerely yours,
A COUNTRY SISTER.

[We think the suggestion that Nurse Debating Societies should take up this subject is admirable. We are always glad to receive reports and discussions from any Debating Clubs associated with Training Schools.—ED.]

NURSE-PRACTITIONERS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have been much struck by a letter which appeared in a recent *British Medical Journal*, apparently from a medical man, in which he says it is a well-known fact that Nurses are acting as "unqualified assistants," and are being "covered" by physicians and surgeons of standing. He asserts:—

- (1) That Nurses pay visits to male patients for the purpose of passing catheters.
- (2) That they administer anaesthetics.
- (3) That they prescribe.
- (4) That, without proper qualifications, they dispense.
- (5) That they give hypodermics—and so on.

He, therefore, argues that as "the whole situation appears to be rapidly deserving the designations of ridiculous and scandalous" it would be better to throw open every portal to the entrance of women to the medical profession, and sternly and severely repress the unqualified practice of the Nurses in the direction of medicine.

I know that you are very much opposed to unqualified practice of any kind, but it appears to me that until the position of Nursing is settled on a very definite and professional basis, we shall always have Nurses encroaching on the borderland of medicine. Let the medical practitioners who object to this join the Royal British Nurses' Association, and help on a Parliamentary Bill which will give Nurses their true position.

Sincerely yours,
PROGRESS.

[This matter is referred to in our Editorial this week.—ED.]

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