

and the present system of awarding marks *en bloc* leaves a loophole for such criticism. I am writing, therefore, in the interests of matrons, to suggest that if matrons of training schools keep the record of the marks given by them on a definite plan, and are able to account for the marks they give or withhold, there can be no possible objection to the publication of these marks, and that there would, I think, be great advantages to be obtained by pursuing such a plan. My own feeling is that the more open and above-board everything connected with examinations is the better. It would be interesting to know the opinion of other matrons upon this subject.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
MATRON.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—May I say how very much interested I have been in the articles on Social Problems which have recently appeared in the NURSING RECORD?

"Hobnailers" opens out a very wide question, and one in which I personally am deeply interested. For there are so many "poor critters" about, and to them is due the fact that the majority of men are unbelievers in the mental powers of women.

I do not so much blame the men, for from their babyhood their womenkind have instilled into them the idea that they are superior beings. It has always puzzled me how, when we have a woman at the head of affairs in our great Empire, this erroneous idea holds ground. But so it is, and one sees its bad fruits on every hand.

I sincerely hope the time is coming when our man-made laws will be altered. I trust that women will soon exercise a right to vote in Parliamentary elections, and that the day is not far distant when the eldest *child*, be it boy or girl, will inherit the father's entailed property.

But if this justice is ever to be done to us, women must leave off allowing themselves to be "mashed," and must boldly assert their right to govern their own affairs, without interference.

I am not a nurse, and, therefore, perhaps, have little right to speak on nursing topics, but if I had the honour of belonging to that profession, I should certainly join the brave minority who are fighting for their rights in the Royal British Nurses' Association. Surely the word "*Nurses*" is a misnomer, for, as far as I can see, the Association is almost entirely governed by men. Now what I want to know is this. Are there any ladies well known in the nursing world as matrons of hospitals on the committees of the leading *Medical* Associations? I should be very surprised to receive an answer in the affirmative. "Things isn't ekal." Why should doctors, and others not even doctors, direct a Nurses' Association when they consider clever women out of place in a Medical one? Well, it is again the fault of the women, or a portion of them, and things will never be righted till they can be made to see their folly. I trust the star to which the waggon of the brave minority is hitched may be a lucky one. The world of thoughtful women is looking on and wishing them success.

Yours faithfully,
ON THE WATCH.

MANSLAUGHTER OR MURDER!

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I notice that under the heading of "Manslaughter or Murder," in last week's issue of the NURSING RECORD, you touch upon the fact that hundreds of infants yearly meet their deaths by overlaying. Doubtless many of these are "Saturday-night deaths," but I think it would be very interesting to know in how many cases the infants who die in this way are the children of married parents. I have had this question brought before me owing to the fact that I have had a considerable amount of experience in district midwifery, in which my work has been only amongst married women, and I cannot call to mind a single instance of overlaying which has occurred in the ten days during which I—or a nurse who has daily reported the cases to me—have visited the cases. Perhaps the risks during this period are not quite so great as at a later stage, when the temptations to drink are greater; but I think it would be very interesting to know if my experience is endorsed by general statistics. Should it be proved that the majority of cases of the overlaying of infants occur when the mothers are single women, the evidence would point to the conclusion that not manslaughter but "premeditated murder" is the cause of these disasters.

Faithfully yours,
L. O. S.

"JUST ANYBODY."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I think that many sick persons, as well as others, who in the past have had serious illness, and know how essential good night nursing is, will be grateful to you for your remarks on the importance of this matter. I speak feelingly for, owing to a long and serious illness, I know its necessity. I was fortunate in having a night nurse kind, alert, and attentive to my slightest wish. But I can well imagine the feelings of those poor patients who are left to "just anybody," and how they must dread the long dreary nights. Dreary even when one has every attention, and every comfort that can be desired. I suppose at night, if one is sleepless, one's senses are preternaturally acute, one is restless, and sensitive to sounds, and, it must be owned, sometimes exacting, impatient and irritable. But a good nurse realizes the situation, and treats any such symptoms as part of the illness it is her duty to nurse, and the comfort of it! Then again, when one does not feel sure if one will see the dawn of the next day, it is a comfort to know that some one is at hand who will be at one's side should the end come. It would be very desolate to die in the dark, or with an unwilling and unskilful nurse at hand. She also would feel very chary of asking an unwilling nurse to perform many little offices which one accepts thankfully at the hands of a willing one. I certainly think that if one must have indifferent attendance at any time, a lot which I hope may never fall to my share, I should like to have "just anybody" in the day time, and reserve the "high-class talent" for the lonely night watches.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours truly,
CHRONIC.

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