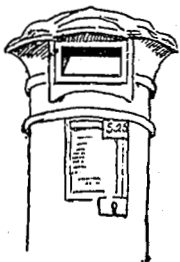


Letters to the Editor.

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.

EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—We nurses are much indebted to you for keeping us in touch with nursing progress all over the world; to read other so-called nursing journals, one would imagine that nursing education and reform were at the same stand-still condition in the States, Canada, South Africa, and the Australian Colonies, as they are at home. I am alluding of course to the professional side of our affairs, as we must all be aware, that in spite of the reactionary attitude of the Royal British Nurses' Association, real progress is being effected in individual nursing schools and institutions, and that in spite of adverse influences, we are going steadily forward, the three years standard of certification is being universally adopted, and the present system of medical lecturers examining and certifying their own pupils, is becoming more and more unsatisfactory to the public, as there is at present absolutely no standard of knowledge required, by which certificated nurses can be recognised by the public. These are all very important points which we nurses hope may be considered at the forthcoming Congress, as the views and opinions of nurses from other and more progressive countries would be listened to with greater consideration than is accorded to those of us at home who venture to "have a mind." Now that the Hon. Officers of the R.B.N.A. have definitely abandoned a professional programme, as announced in this month's Journal, the course is quite clear for a National Society to deal with the important questions at issue.

A GRATEFUL READER.

FASHIONABLE MOVEMENTS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Please discourage "Fashionable Movements" in nursing, as suggested by "One who thinks, and who Loves her Profession." Nursing is such all important, earnest work, requiring the very highest qualities of mind, and hourly disregard of self, that nothing short of the highest motives should inspire the women who intend to make it their life's work. Nursing is too "fashionable" already. No nursing society can be started but it must be placed under the "patronage" of some person of social eminence, and thus the sturdy professional basis on which men's professions flourish is denied to us. What is needed is that self-respect, and a sense of professional responsibility, should be inculcated in nurses, and they should be taught not to depend on "Fashion" for their social status, but on the public estimation of their work.—Yours,
COMMON SENSE.

HONOUR AND GLORY.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I feel impelled to take up my pen in answer to your correspondent who asserts that "women are willing to go out and nurse the plague—because there is glory and notoriety in it." I must own I consider this a very hard thing to say. There is not much honour and glory in contracting this dreaded disease, and dying in a foreign country away from friends and relations, and this is what those who go out to nurse the plague lay themselves open to. It is just possible, surely, that the nurses who go have some sense of their professional responsibility, that they realize that there are sick who need skilled nursing, who will die if they do not receive it, and all that is noblest in them responds to the need, and they are ready to give up lucrative posts at home to take up this work, full of hardship, monotony and danger as it often is.

For the rest, glory and notoriety go strange ways, and those who attain them are not always those who have most earned them. Take the plague nurses for instance. Those of us who know the brave little band who first started when there was no suggestion of notoriety, cannot but wonder why some have been selected for honours, while the services of others who have borne the burden and heat of the day have been altogether ignored. It is a matter which might well be enquired into, and certainly the only honour and glory which a nurse who does her duty now-a-days can expect, is the approval of her own conscience.

Yours faithfully,

E. M. J.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I should like, if I may, to ask your advice on a subject which it seems is of some importance not only to myself, but to nurses generally. Is it right that I should receive and carry out verbal orders with regard to sleeping-draughts and hypodermic injections ordered by the house physician? Of course it is strictly in order to have all orders written on the patients' boards, but I find this, at night at all events, a rule which is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. It is a nurse's business, so we are constantly told, to "obey." Obey, obey, obey, would seem in fact to be considered her whole duty. But all the same, it appears to me, it is sometimes her duty to consider her own position, and what would mine be if I gave a draught upon a verbal order, and then the patient became, from any cause worse. Would a somewhat sleepy house physician remember his instructions in the morning, and if not, should I be blamed for the patient's condition? Meditation on such a possibility often gives me a mauvais quart d'heure in the small hours.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

NIGHT OWL.

[There can be no doubt that no nurse should give sleeping draughts without written instructions. Say so first to your house physician, and if, as is unlikely, he declines to put his order on the board, place the matter before your Matron.—Ed.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)