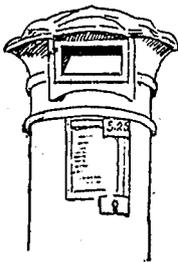


Letters to the Editor.

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.

THE EVER WELCOME "RECORD."

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—I have to-day sent a Post Office Order to the amount of a year's subscription for our Ever Welcome RECORD. At the same time, I want to thank you for the help one always finds in its pages, and for the high standard set before all who read it. Wishing you and all on the staff every success,

I remain, yours sincerely,

A VERY GRATEFUL READER.

Mutra, North West Provinces,
India.

[We thank our correspondent for her kindly letter. It is gratifying to know that the NURSING RECORD is appreciated and helpful in this distant part of the world.—Ed.]

HOSPITAL SCANDALS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have no wish to trespass on your valuable space, but, perhaps, you will permit me to record a *mild* protest against the somewhat intemperate statement of your correspondent, "Out-patient Nurse," that I made wholesale accusations against the out-patient department of the Hospitals, the only sentence in my letter of the 13th ultimo referring to the latter was the following:—"For the mere mention of their casual wards calls up a lurid panorama of hideous and careless cruelty." I may mention that for nearly 30 years I have deplored the sufferings of the poverty-stricken crowd waiting for so many weary hours for the farthing bottle of medicine, which is, no doubt, the source of the gratitude of the "innumerable multitude" to which your correspondent refers.

But the sentence in my former letter was merely a slight attempt to clothe in few words the striking speech made at the South Place Institute a few weeks ago, at a meeting of which I was chairman, by the Missionary attached to two of the Metropolitan Police Courts. However, I am glad that my letter has called forth, from an "Out-patient Nurse of many years standing," the startling admission *that abuses exist*, because one of the grave impediments placed in the way of hospital reformers, is the claim made by those who support them that Hospitals are so perfect that laymen, at least, should not call them in question, although she must well know that they are enveloped in a kind of *official* mystery to which no other public institution can for a moment be compared, and if it were not for the public press such scandals as the

recent death in the padded-room of the London Hospital, when the jury refused to believe the attendants on their oaths, would otherwise never be heard of.

The analogy of the House of Commons though rather far fetched, offers no parity to the Hospitals, for thank God, the *smug complacency* of that distrusted institution does not rest upon its supreme claims to scientific infallibility and philanthropic humanity, while its claims to heal our political ills, have certainly a little more foundation than the Hospitals to heal our bodily ones. At least, in the former house, there are no secret chambers of horrors studiously shut out from public scrutiny. But the special pleading of your correspondent is more than completed by that appeal to the British sense of justice and fair play. One of these cant phrases, which we often hear repeated by those principally concerned in upholding the present hospital system, though it is quite on a level with her spurious analogy of the House of Commons. With regard to providing a better substitute than the present out-patient department, it sounds like an echo of one of Mr. Bumble's speech from Dickens' "Oliver Twist." As for holding my peace, I have not the slightest intention till public opinion demands a root and branch reform of the present Hospital system.

Yours faithfully,

J. G. OSBORNE, Secretary,

The Society for the Protection of Hospital Patients.

Brookland House,

Porten Road,

West Kensington, W.

March 7th, 1899.

A HAPPY SUGGESTION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read with extreme interest in last week's NURSING RECORD that, once again, the question of Registration of Nurses has been forced to the front, this time in Tasmania. A stronger proof that registration is the remedy we require to deal with the abuses which are springing up on all sides, and bringing the Nursing Profession into disrepute, could surely not be given. On all sides, and in all parts of the world, when any thoughtful person attempts to deal with the problem, again and again registration suggests itself as the obvious course to adopt. Until, however, this can be brought about I must say that I think Mr. Ramsay's suggestion a most happy one, and one which might with advantage be adopted in this country. If the training schools do not recognize the duty of co-operating they must surely recognize their responsibilities to their pupils, and to the public. Their certificated pupils have a right to expect that they shall be protected from the competition of untrained persons, and the public have a right to have some means of finding out whether nurses do, as they profess, hold the certificates of certain training schools. If these schools, once a year, published a list of their certificated pupils a definite step in the right direction would be taken. I hope Mr. Ramsay's letter which you printed, will have the effect of drawing attention to the matter.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

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