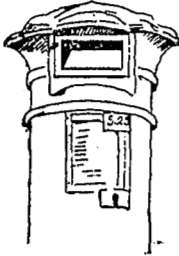


Letters to the Editor.

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 ADMINISTRATION OF POISONS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was very glad to see in last week's NURSING RECORD that one of your correspondents drew attention to the lax methods which prevail concerning the administration of medicines in hospitals; such medicines being not unfrequently of a poisonous nature. It appears to me that there is room for much reform in this direction. Another matter to which I should like to call attention is the way in which poisons are often left unsafeguarded in hospital wards and lavatories. Do we not all know the test case, which stands exposed to view, with its array of poisons? The stock bottles of carbolic, perchloride of mercury, and other disinfectants in strong solutions, which stand all in a row; even the tray on the ward table, on which there is a collection of brandy, opium, and strychnine, is not unknown. Of course, all these drugs must be at hand, and it may be argued that the ward is never left, and that there is no danger in these common practices; but it seems to me that some method might be devised whereby such drugs and disinfectants might be at hand, and yet in a safe place. It cannot be right in a ward where there are all sorts and conditions of patients, some of them delirious maybe, that poisons should be so easily obtainable. Perhaps some experienced Matrons and Ward Sisters would express their opinion on this subject.

I am, Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
BROWN STUDY.

"A DELUSION AND A SNARE."

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to tell you how much I agree with your demand for some sort of sifting-out from the nursing ranks. One of the worst evils now-a-days are the numerous little stuffy nursing homes set up by half-trained, or altogether untrained, women all over London. I have lately had the misfortune to be connected with one of these places, and it is most astonishing to me that doctors can permit their patients to be in such places. But, then, they don't know half that goes on. I was taken in as a nurse, and put into uniform, although I had not had any training in a hospital. The Superintendent told me I should be much better trained under her direction in a home, and I worked for many weeks without any pay, until I found out the bogus nature of the whole concern. There were sometimes five or six patients in the house, and no one, not even a servant, to do anything. The Superintendent did the cooking, such as it was, and I

did the nursing. I did my best, but it was most dangerous and unjustifiable. There were two other nurses bound by agreement, but they had only had fever training, and they were constantly out private nursing at £2 2s. a week, and were sent to all sorts of cases. Their salary was £25 a year, so their fees, I suppose, partly kept the home going. It is time such places were put down by law, and it is wicked pretending the nursing world is on a right footing, so long as the public are cheated in this way. I hope you will put my letter in the RECORD. Owing to reading it I came to see my mistake, and am now accepted for three years' training at a good hospital, so that I owe you much gratitude.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours truly,
G. B.

A BAD INVESTMENT.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—If you can spare space in your valuable journal, will you express your opinion on the "One Year's Certificate?" From personal experience I think something should be done to prevent the hospitals selling these useless and heartrending documents. I have one. I asked the advice of the Matron of the hospital before entering for training, and she told me I could be thoroughly trained in a year, and advised me to enter the institution as a Lady Probationer, to pay £1 1s. a week, after which time I was awarded a certificate, retained to do Sisters' holiday duties, and afterwards I obtained a post in a country hospital, which position I had to resign for family reasons. I now want to get work, and wherever I apply I am told I am not qualified, a three years' certificate of training being required for every position of responsibility. It is too hard. I am too old to begin training again. I am strong and active, and still I am superseded over and over again by others, who have been fortunate enough not only to get their three years' training *for nothing*, but an efficient education, and a reliable certificate as well. What can I do? I cannot get the position of Sister in the Army, Navy, Indian Army Service, Plague Duty, Sisters' Duty in hospital, or good infirmary; in fact, I am stranded, my time wasted, and my money gone. It appears to me a most cruel and wicked thing that Committees of Charitable Institutions are permitted to delude working women and so mislead them. Knowing your sense of justice on questions relating to women, I leave the matter in your hands, feeling sure you will take some steps to show up this abuse.

Yours sincerely,
"AN UTLANDER."

[We deeply sympathise with our correspondent, and as we have lately met nurses suffering under the same disadvantages, we propose to deal with the matter in an early issue, and will bring the question to the notice of the Committees of those hospitals which issue one year's certificates, in the hope that they will realise the injustice of the system under existing circumstances. It is to be sincerely hoped that some strong expression of opinion will be given on this point at the International Nursing Conference. The Lady Pupil is now an obsolete quantity in the economy of efficient training schools.—ED.]

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