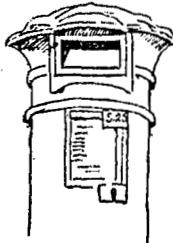


Letters to the Editor.

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.

AN IMPORTANT DETAIL.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—I am very glad to see that a correspondent has raised the question of the service of food in hospitals in your columns. There is no doubt that many of our hospital patients are used to a much less rough and ready style in their own homes, but, though one would willingly take trouble to serve the food of a patient, to whom the thick mugs, and urn tea, are a real trial, it is quite impossible to do so in a general ward. One would cause jealousy at once; all must share and share alike. I think, if we are to have the meals served in a more appetising manner, the matter must, as she has suggested, be taken in hand by the diet kitchen. The actual ward work is often so pressing and so urgent, that there is no time to give to the refinements of life. If each hospital had a diet kitchen of its own however, under the superintendence of a trained nurse, the thing might quite easily be managed. It would be of great value to all the pupil nurses to pass a certain portion of their time in this kitchen, and then it would be their business to attend to nicety in the way of serving food, and they would not be thinking of other matters in the ward which needed attending to while they were preparing trays. The nurses of the ward should in every instance, I think, take the trays to and from the patients, or else mistakes might easily be made, and besides, they could not otherwise report upon what the patient had taken, but the actual preparation of them, and the washing up of dainty crockery afterwards, might well be performed by the nurses on diet duty.

I am, Madam,
Yours faithfully,
STAFF NURSE.

A QUESTION OF TRAINING.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—I am a nurse of six years standing and hold the two years' certificate of a good training school. After obtaining my certificate, I did private nursing in connection with the same institution, and since then have held the position of Charge Nurse in a Special Hospital. Recently, however, when I applied for a Sister's post, which I should much like to have obtained, I was told that although my testimonials were quite satisfactory, and the Matron would have been glad to have me, yet it was quite out of the question because I had only a two years' certificate.

It seems hard, and as my certificate stood in my way in this case in gaining the post I mention, I am afraid it will in other cases also. I should be much obliged if you could give me some advice on the subject.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours very truly,
DISAPPOINTED.

[We are sorry for your disappointment, but the fact that you only possess a two years' certificate will certainly stand in your way. The three years' standard has for so long been recognized now, that it is to be regretted that any school advocates a shorter one, more especially as a three years' training is now a *sine qua non* for many public appointments.
—ED.]

THE SPIRIT OF NURSING.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—Your article on "The Spirit of Nursing" in last week's NURSING RECORD will, I think, give pleasure to many of your readers. It puts into words for us what so many of us feel, but which, not having the tongue or the pen of a ready speaker or writer, we are unable to say. As is usual in the RECORD, you set a high ideal before us, and one which will take us a lifetime to live up to, and somehow, though we know we cannot attain to it, yet at least we feel impelled to strive after it, and we shall surely get nearer to perfection than if we had no goal. I am so glad that you insist upon the duty of the training school to the nurse, as well as of the nurse to her school. So many schools, it seems to me, ought to be called something else, for a school is surely a place where they teach, and this is the last thing that is thought of very often; indeed, if we poor nurses have a thirst for instruction, and venture to show an intelligent interest in our cases, we get well snubbed for our pains. The opportunities of learning on all hands are so great, that of necessity we must, if we are of average intelligence, pick up a good deal for ourselves. But this is learning, not *training*. Moreover one feels that one might learn so much more if only some systematic plan of instruction were in force, and one were taught, by those who know, how best to direct one's studies. You will understand therefore how glad I was to read that you seem to think that aspirations after a *quid pro quo* for one's services are legitimate, for I never have been able to see why one should settle down contentedly into a domestic drudge and give up all idea of nursing intelligently.

It is also a pleasure to read in these days, when so often these qualities seem so little accounted, that "a good nurse is, beyond all things, a comforting personality." I look round upon my nursing acquaintance and wonder how many of them answer to this description. Well meaning enough, skilled, and dexterous in their work many nurses are, but one could count the "comforting personalities" on the fingers of one hand. Is it not so?

Thanking you for the help that the RECORD always is,
I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
NURSE MARY.

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