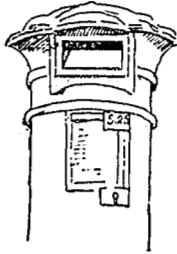


Letters to the Editor.

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 ARMY NURSING RESERVE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I notice in your issue of November 4th, the statement that "The qualification of a three years' certificate from a training school of repute has been dispensed with in several instances" by the Central Red Cross Committee in the selection of nurses for the Army Nursing Reserve. This statement surprised me greatly because only last Tuesday one of my nurses, who has had between four and five years' excellent adult work since her training in a children's hospital, and who had great military interest was rejected solely on those grounds.

Yours faithfully,

M. ANDREWS.

[In support of our statement, we need only mention three cases where members of the Army Nursing Reserve have, we presume through personal influence, been admitted to the Roll without the very necessary qualification of a three years' certificate of training, and we therefore quote from the printed Roll of Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and Nursing Directory.

Sainsbury, Emily Minnie (Chartered Nurses' Society). Cert. Wirral Children's Hospital, Birkenhead (thirty-six beds), two years. Royal Berks Hospital, Reading, one year.

Penrose, Margaret. H.R.H. Princess Christian's Nursing Home, Windsor. Pro. Sussex County Hospital (certificate one year's training, December 1886 to December 1887). A misleading entry is made in the Royal British Nurses' Association Roll which would lead it to be supposed that a three years' certificate of training was possessed by this lady.

Thomson, Helen Foggo. Wirral Children's Hospital, Birkenhead (36 beds) 1882-3. Portsmouth Hosp., 1883-4. Hope Hosp., Manchester in 1884. Manchester Sick Poor and Nursing Institution, 1884-6 (three institutions in one year).

We have not space to quote further individual cases, but we are of opinion that had the Army Nursing Service Reserve been organized by the representative body of trained nurses, who approved of our original suggestion in bringing the organization of such a corps of nurses before the Royal British Nurses' Association, instead of this suggestion having been "seized upon with avidity" by the Hon. Officers, and by them disassociated from the Nurses Corporation, that a high standard of qualification would have been adopted by the Matrons for all members of such an important National Service. Moreover a medical certificate of health would have been required, which would have eliminated several nurses accepted by the present Committee.—Ed.]

A WOMAN'S VIEW.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—The NURSING RECORD always adopts such a liberal attitude towards all questions affecting the interests of women that I have no hesitation in writing to point out what seems to be a very serious omission in the organisation of the various funds for the benefit of our sick and wounded soldiers, of their wives and families, their widows and orphans, namely, the all but absolute exclusion of women from the committees appointed to deal with these matters. I say all but absolute, because it is true that the selection of the nurses of the Army Nursing Reserve is in the hands of a daughter of the Queen, but this fact is not, from a professional point of view, a matter for congratulation. There are many ways in which the influence of royalty may be beneficially used, but these do not surely include the selection of professional workers, which should be in the hands of professional persons. It would be just as reasonable for the selection of the medical men who are being sent out to the war to be made by the Prince of Wales. Why not? Probably because his Royal Highness would be the first to realize the incongruity of such a position and decline to act.

The point however which I wish to emphasize is the exclusion of women from participation in the management of our National Funds at this crisis. Where are they on the Committee of the Lord Mayor's Fund, the Patriotic Fund, and others? Failing participation in these, one would have supposed that in the arrangement of working parties and the collection of clothing, the services of women would have been requisitioned, but no. I rubbed my eyes and read the announcement twice, but there it is, plain enough. "At the request of the Central British Red Cross Committee, the St. John's Ambulance Association, which is represented thereon by the Director and Chairman, Viscount Knutsford and Sir John Furley, has undertaken the organization of working parties. Shirts, sleeping suits, and stockings, &c., are needed." Surely the arrangement for making shirts and sleeping suits, might have been left to Lady Knutsford and Lady Furley. All this monopoly on the part of men is a real danger, which will surely come home to the women who have not yet forgotten the lesson of the London Local Government Bill, and the treatment they received at the hands of the House of Lords when the Turf Club was whipped up to carry the vote against them, and noble Lords made their appearance in the House who were so little known there, that the tellers had to ask their names. The fact is men are becoming obstructive; power being almost exclusively in their hands at present, they mean to keep it if possible, and we must look to it if we are not, to have those privileges—rights we have none—which we already possess, filched from us. Lastly, if this war is ended without something being done nationally, by invitation, by British women, there could scarcely be more conclusive proof of the increasing domination of man. Men say we are jealous. Well, we can scarcely claim the monopoly of that vice since they cling with such tenacity to every shred of power, and deliberately exclude us even in such matters as organising the nursing of the sick, and arranging working parties for their benefit.

I am, Madam,

Yours obediently,

A MERE WOMAN.

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