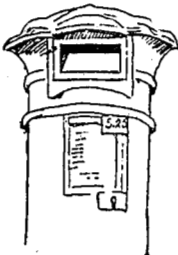


Letters to the Editor.

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.

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

The Infirmary, Blackburn.

22nd Oct., 1900.

MADAM,—Some time since, upon completing my training, I was advised by my Matron to join the Royal British Nurses' Association, having specially in view the advantage of registration. I then believed that the Association only admitted on its register nurses holding a three years' certificate, and concluded that registration by their board would prove my qualifications as a fully trained nurse. I now find that I was entirely in error; no three years' certificate being necessary for candidates, who may pick up their training in any desultory fashion they please, provided only that one year of the time (apparently this even need not be consecutive training) be passed in a general hospital, the only further stipulation being that the institution they train in must have 40 beds. It follows that a nurse may spend three months in one general hospital and nine months in another, and may leave without a certificate and still be qualified for registration equally with those who have gone with credit through their full course of three years' training and hold the certificate of their hospital. I think nurses ought to be made fully aware that such a form of registration is utterly worthless, as no real standard of training is required for it.

The Royal British Nurses' Association consider there are various reasons why a nurse may be prevented from completing her three years' course of training in the same hospital. "She may break down in health or be called away by urgent family reasons." Under these circumstances, however, no Matron or committee would refuse to take back a nurse to complete her training. Such cases continually occur, where the nurse is granted leave of absence for several weeks or perhaps months, and returns and finishes her training; the time she is away, of course, not being included. On the printed form of questions of the Royal British Nurses' Association sent to her training schools, no question is asked as to the reason for her leaving without completing her training, or whether she left with the approval of her Matron. Every day's experience shows more and more forcibly the need for State Registration, and everyone can give instances of unqualified pretenders to the title bringing discredit upon the name of nurse. And nothing can save us from sharing in the general condemnation their conduct calls forth, except such a legal registration; then any person, who may prove herself unworthy, may be struck off the roll and cease to have a right to bear the name, as is done in the case of doctors, lawyers, etc. The qualified nurses in Lancashire have been for some time anxiously waiting to see what the profes-

sion in London was going to do in the matter of State Registration. They have waited in vain, and now feel they must act for themselves if anything is to be done, bearing in mind the well-known proverb, "What Lancashire thinks to-day, England thinks to-morrow." At the same time if members in other parts of England would work with them, it would greatly facilitate the movement, and I write in the hope of inducing some of your readers to join me in an appeal to Parliament to grant the boon of a professional status to those who can produce three years' certificates from recognised training schools.

I am, Madam, faithfully yours,

R. W. HOWARD.

[We are informed that our correspondent sent a letter on this subject to the *Hospital*, whose Editor, having communicated with the officials of the Royal British Nurses' Association, replied that he "saw no purpose to be gained by publishing it." Of course not! Sir Henry Burdett has been the most strenuous and virulent opponent of Registration, as he was of the R.B.N.A. when it was under the management of trained nurses and until it gained its Royal Charter. Since the Association was captured by the few medical autocrats who now control it for their own purposes; since the best class of trained nurses refused to take any further part in it; and since its Registration work, was converted into a delusion and a sham, Sir Henry Burdett has of course supported the Association, and now excludes from the columns of his paper any criticisms upon its work. The *NURSING RECORD*, which from its first number, has worked strongly, consistently, and single-handed for the legal Registration of Nurses, appreciates keenly the growing feeling all over the British Empire that Nurses must be registered and controlled by the State, for the safety of the public and the welfare of the profession. We cordially welcome the aid of Lancashire nurses in the great campaign. If nurses are sufficiently in earnest to work for this great reform neither Sir Henry Burdett nor any other wire-puller can prevent it.

A THOROUGHbred MONGREL.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—No reader values the brisk manner in which the *NURSING RECORD* handles nursing politics more than I do, and I always make a point of bringing it to the notice of such of my patients as are able to take an interest in public affairs, and by this means I flatter myself I do my little best to educate the public in our professional condition. But in every case I find the *RECORD* useful in the choice of books to read, both for the patients and myself. To dog lovers "The Thoroughbred Mongrel" is a rare treat, and perhaps it would interest Mr. Stephen Townsend to know that my present patient, who is devoted to "Skyles," intends to make Christmas gifts of his most delightful and sympathetic book. It is to be hoped that this book will be brought to the notice of the Vivisection Society. Surely Mr. Townsend holds a brief for the same—the scene where dear little "Hett" loses her master at the hospital and wanders into the "Schola Medicinæ," and, by horrible ill luck, into "The Physiological Laboratory," and hides herself in the "Theatre," and in a most realistic manner suffers the torments of the condemned, should be reprinted and cir-

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