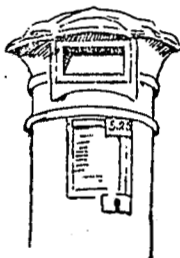


Letters to the Editor:

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.

MATRONS' COUNCIL DELEGATE.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I hope you will grant me a short space in your valuable paper to thank the Members of the Matrons' Council for honouring me by electing me as their delegate to the Nurses' Congress at Buffalo. I assure the Matrons' Council that I will do my best to worthily represent it and that I feel extremely gratified by their confidence.

Yours faithfully,
M. MOLLETT,
Matron.

Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital,
April 22nd, 1901.

THE CRUX OF THE QUESTION.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have also read the correspondence in *The Times*, and agree with a "County Hospital Matron" that Mr. Holland's attack on the Matrons' Council is thoroughly illogical. I have been counting up the years of experience of the ladies who composed the deputation to the War Office, and find from an authoritative source that it amounts to ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO YEARS!! Mrs. Bedford Fenwick 23 years, Miss Isla Stewart 22 years, Miss Knight 21 years, Miss Huxley 21 years, Miss Mollett 19 years, Miss Breay 16 years, and Miss B. Jones 10 years—all these ladies having been through the whole nursing curriculum from Probationers to Matrons, and in two instances, that of Mrs. Fenwick and of Miss Jones, they have also experience of active service in time of war.

Mr. Sydney Holland, who arrogates to himself the right to publicly deny to those experienced women the right to form an opinion on nursing matters, has been Chairman of the London Hospital since December 1896! a school notorious for its bitter opposition to legal status for trained nurses—status which would at once compel it to raise its term of certification of nurses from two to three years, the present standard in all well organised nurse-training schools; to officially enforce the regulation that probationers shall not be sent out to the public as "thoroughly trained nurses," at a charge of £2 2s. a week, and it would also prevent the hospital absorbing *hundreds of pounds* profit, annually, made by the hard work of its private nursing staff. The crux of the question is that the Matrons' Council is the only Nurses' association now which stands for State Registration of Nurses and all the professional benefits which such a reform would bring to the nurses and the public, and Mr. Holland and his friends fear it. This attack is only part and parcel of the R. B. N. A. intolerance of trained nurses associating together for mutual support and progress. We

Matrons must stand firm for right and personal liberty, and we know, with our present officers to lead us, that we can do it.

Yours gratefully,
A LATE "LONDON HOSPITAL" SISTER.

ARMY NURSING REFORM.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Could there possibly be a more apt illustration for the need of the Army Nursing Reform advocated by the Matrons' Council than the account which you published last week of the disgraceful conduct of hospital orderlies at Netley Hospital. There is, I venture to say, no civil hospital throughout the country where such outrageous behaviour would take place. The conduct of these orderlies is the more notable when we remember that the Government is paying the institution to which, at least, two of the three belong, a large sum in order to retain the services of these men. Surely the time must come shortly for even our Army Medical Department to realise the wisdom of employing many more female nurses than at present, and to endorse Lord Roberts dictum as to "the necessity and economy of an ample nursing service for our Army." The sooner the better.

Yours faithfully,
ARMY RESERVE.

HOW MANY NURSES NEEDED?

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I believe that a common average of nurses to patients at the present day is from 2½ to 3 patients per nurse, even in the case of adults, and as children need more attention than adults it would seem that the staff mentioned by you last week is the least with which a children's ward of 24 beds can be efficiently nursed. Personally I have found that for a ward of 16 cots a Sister, Staff Nurse, and two probationers on day duty, and a Staff Nurse and probationer on night duty are the least number of nurses with which it can be properly worked. In some ways, at any rate during the summer months, the hours off duty for the nurses of a children's ward are easier to arrange than in one for adults. In the ward to which I refer, immediately after the dinners have been served (at twelve o'clock) and the children subsequently made comfortable, the blinds are drawn down, and the greater number of the little patients sleep until two o'clock, so that during this time the work of the nurses is light. Again, in the evening, prayers are said and the ward closed by 6 p.m. At the same time various duties fall to the lot of nurses in a children's ward from which they are exempt in adult wards. For instance no nurse who delights in pretty pink or blue overalls and dainty pinafores for her patients trust these to the chances of fortune in an average hospital laundry. Therefore she generally avails herself of the odd moments when the children are asleep to do a little laundry work for her small charges. It is astonishing how prettily the children can be dressed at an infinitesimal cost if a nurse is careful over this detail. But taking all this into consideration, the evening is a light time in a well-organised children's ward, and where there is a nursing staff of four persons two can generally get off duty after six o'clock.

SUPT. CHILDREN'S WARD.

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