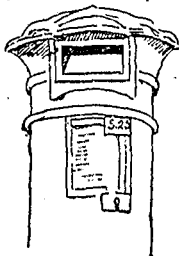


## Letters to the Editor.

## NOTES, QUERIES. &amp;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 EARLY BIRD."

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

MADAM,—There is no need to take up the glove in defence of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland against the childish attack of the Chairman of the London Hospital. That body appears quite capable of taking care of itself.

Why should Mr. Sydney Holland fall foul of these ladies? Have they not as much right as any one else to offer their help to the War Office at the present unsatisfactory crisis of events? Seeing the representatives of "those large nursing schools" Mr. Holland quotes so loudly have failed to bestir themselves in the matter of Army nursing reform, or prefer to sit at ease whilst other people work, why should he disparage those who *are* ready to do what they can for the good cause. I did not think he was the sort of Jack-in-Office who always runs full tilt against any suggestion he has not originated himself. If the Bar did not teach him that personal abuse is considered a sign of great forensic weakness he must have realized that fact by now, and will probably pause ere he "rushes in" again where a little celestial hesitancy would be more appropriate.

Is Mr. Sydney Holland but the catspaw and mouth-piece of that weary old clique who make a practice of opposing every nursing reform as regularly as the night follows day? There seems a familiar r-r-rumble about the roll of his invective, and the usual discourtesy to women is not absent either in the utterances of this preux chevalier. Or is it possible that his few years experience as the *Chairman* of a hospital have led him to look on *himself* in the light of a long sought Messiah of the nursing profession, with a view to posing in that attitude in Pall Mall? His incomprehensible indignation does certainly recall the angry twitterings of a rather early bird who sees a succulent morsel annexed by a still more "previous" fowl than himself. This would explain the situation and its true inwardness. A hard headed community will naturally prefer the combined practical advice of 120 professional experts to that of one solitary Hospital Chairman; but Mr. Holland need not go unconsoled, for he appears to be bubbling over with that enthusiasm so characteristic of the youthful reformer, and as I sat through the whole of Lord Sandhurst's Commission on London Hospitals some years ago, I can assure the Chairman of the London that he will discover full employment for all his talents near home—indeed it is given to few mortals to find so much material to work upon so very close at hand.

C. B. MYERS.

Member of the Executive Committee of the Cumberland Ladies' Nursing Association.

## "WE MUST BE FUR-R-UM."

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to see from the Matrons' Council Report that those present at the Meeting unanimously agreed not to furnish Mr. Holland with a list of members, because he has absolutely nothing to do with our affairs, and all attempt at assuming any such power over us by hospital officials should be firmly opposed at once. In the country Matrons have much more liberty of action and conscience than in London, and it has not been found to have ill results. There is something eminently snobbish in assuming that the *workers* in any vocation are incapable of forming opinions on their own affairs. The folly is in permitting titled amateurs the power to muddle our professional work. Wait till the whole truth comes out (and it will out) about the Nursing in this South African war which has been largely controlled by unprofessional persons. I know a dozen scandals which have been hushed up, and the whole world knows the horrible sacrifice of valuable lives to the present "system" of the Army Medical Department. As you say, "How tired one gets of all this vulgar twaddle!"

Yours sincerely,

ONE WHO HAS LOST A DEAR ONE FROM LACK OF NURSING IN THE WAR.

## "WASH LADIES."

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—I was sorry to see a "Superintendent Children's Ward," suggesting in your last week's issue that laundry work should be added to a nurse's duties in a children's ward. Surely we nurses have enough to do without doing washing. In this hospital there is simply no time for it, and if the children cannot be "prettily dressed" without the nurses washing their overalls they must not be "pretty." It is difficult enough to keep them clean. The number of nurses to a bed does not here come up to your standard. We have one Sister and two nurses for 20 cots; it is not enough.

"ONE OF THE NURSES."

## BELOW THE SALT.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to corroborate what "Tired of Private Nursing" says about the depreciation of private nursing by the tone of the R.B.N.A. of late years. Whilst working for one of the members of this so-called nurses' association, my professional position was consistently ignored. Messages as to the treatment of the case were sent to me by this medical man through the mother of the patient and other members of the family, and I had no power to help myself, as if I had protested I should no doubt have come in collision with the committee of the society to which I then belonged, controlled by the medical men for whom we worked, and on which the nurses were not represented. Feeling sure I should sooner or later find myself in an invidious position in which my good name would be injured, I have given up private nursing and returned to hospital. I strongly agree with you that a balance of power should be maintained on private nursing co-operations by the representation of the nurses—who, as you say, "pay the piper"—on the committee, otherwise we are quite helpless and only tread under a harrow.

Yours,

"NO LONGER A TOAD."

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