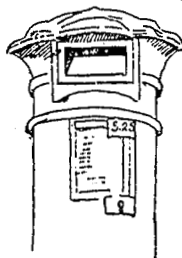


Letters to the Editor.

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 NURSES' CO-OPERATION.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAME,—The suggestion to resign in connection with the Nurses' Co-operation and start afresh seems the best thing to do to some members. As you have so clearly pointed out the nurses are not *members* of the present Co-operation, and are, in fact, merely the servants of the real members of the Co-operation, many of whom form the committee. It seems a great shame, considering on what a basis the society was founded, that Sir Henry Burdett was allowed to propose and get passed a Constitution excluding the nurses from membership and all real power in their own society. Now, we seem between the devil and the deep sea. We must either remain in our present invidious position, or break loose from the Co-operation and lose all the advantages we have been working up for the past ten years. In any case, it seems we nurses must be the sport of one faction or the other. It is just the R.B.N.A. over again. The nurses found their own society, and when it is a success Sir Henry Burdett comes along, sows the seeds of dissension, and disrupts the whole thing. It's a right down shame.

Yours truly,
A DISHEARTENED NURSE.

[There is only one firm basis on which to found a commercial society—such as Private Nurses' Co-operations are—the workers must be members, largely compose the Governing Committee, and select their own officers. But to do this certain members will have to *work*. The truth is nurses know so little of business, and care for so little but fees, that they cannot eat their cake and have it too. If they are to manage their own Co-operations, they can only do it by giving time to the work, and time means money.

Of the three Nurses' Co-operations now working on the 7½ per cent. system in London—The Nurses' Co-operation, The Registered Nurses' Society, and The Chartered Nurses' Society—the second alone is on a sound foundation, because each nurse on the staff is a *member* of the Society; they are liberally represented on the Committee, they have a trained nurse as Hon. Superintendent, and a trained nurse as Secretary and Office Superintendent, and the nurses' vote largely predominates on the Governing Body.

The fundamental error in the Constitution (arranged by Sir Henry Burdett) of the Nurses' Co-operation is that the nurses are *employées*, not *members*, of the Co-operation, and in the Chartered Nurses' Society the whole constitution is rotten to the

core; the Committee is dominated by medical men, with a mere sprinkling of Matrons, *who are content to exclude the Nurses altogether from any representation on the committee of their Society*. An untrained person selects the Nurses, and is in charge of the office, which is as obsolete as it is humiliating to any trained and certificated Nurse who has to take orders from her. Moreover, this Society has no standard of efficiency, as nurses are admitted on to the staff who have picked up their training promiscuously in a variety of institutions, and specialism is recognised as an efficient qualification. We think it is quite time all Nurses' so called Co-operations were managed on a just, self-governing basis, and professional philanthropists and "notoriety-seeking agitators" should be given notice to quit.—ED.]

HOWARD DE WALDEN HOME, JUNE 14TH, 1901.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

Hall full of nurses. Committee skulking in back room.

Nurses' Committee decorated with red bows, and bearing piles of agenda papers calling on everyone to resign. Also a fiery written document headed up, "For Liberty and Free Speech."

Miss Honnor Morten arrives armed with a police whistle and a box of cough lozenges. She and Mr. Pitts and Mrs. Large fight for the chair. Mr. Pitts wins.

Dreary statements interrupted by pertinent questions from the nurses follow: the committee learn absolutely that the nurses believe in their superintendant and won't have her bullied, or be bullied any more themselves.

We mean to run our own business in future.

A NURSE.

[The above letter, presumably, from one who was present at the meeting between the Co-operation Committee and Nurses on the 14th inst. is interesting as a side light on the present controversy. We hope the writer will not find herself out of the frying-pan into the fire, with Sir Henry Burdett as Dictator, which is, we learn, the pleasing alternative to control by the present Committee.—ED.]

NO BRAINS NEED APPLY.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—My experience is that intellect in nurses is not appreciated by the public, particularly by the lower-middle class section of it. I have nursed many cases in conjunction with a friend who is not interested in affairs, and finds reading which requires thought too great a strain while she is at a case. I feel a keen interest in everything, and avail myself of every opportunity to learn all I can of all sorts and conditions of men and things, and make the necessary constant effort to repel the invasion of mind-rust. But I have invariably found that the patients' friends decided that my friend was "a most devoted nurse" because she was apparently oblivious to all but nursing matters, while I, with various interests, gave them the impression of being not nearly so devoted to my work. Yet my friend privately admits she is thoroughly tired of private nursing, while I still remain an enthusiast and idealist on the subject.

Yours faithfully,
BRAINS.

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