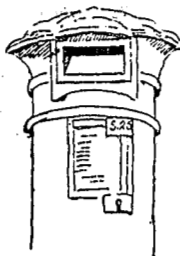


Letters to the Editor.

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

WORKHOUSE NURSING.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Through the courtesy of Miss Louisa Twining I have been able to confirm that which I had previously suspected, viz., that Mr. Humphreys has annexed and labelled as "my (Mr. Humphrey's) scheme," the plan formulated by Miss Twining, and published by her in July, 1901.

I have no intention, therefore, of discussing the matter further with Mr. Humphreys, but as that gentleman has represented me as holding views entirely contrary to my expressed opinions, I must ask you to allow me to correct his statements.

In my last letter, after stating that nurses in the smaller Infirmaries were not well paid, and were badly governed, I expressed the opinion that with adequate salaries and proper government there would be no lack of good nurses. In the face of this expression Mr. Humphreys accuses me of holding exactly diverse opinions, and bombards me with extracts from the reports of Local Government Board inspectors, with every one of which I entirely agree. Either Mr. Humphreys is singularly obtuse, or he has resorted to the discreditable dodge of representing me as holding opinions contrary to the actual facts, that he might have the easy advantage of controverting them.

Mr. Humphreys also represents me as advocating the employment of untrained nurses, whereas I expressly stated that I admitted the advisability of having *highly trained* nurses, a statement which Mr. Humphreys carefully omitted to quote, and I endeavoured to make it perfectly plain that the suggested massing together of the sick would not supply the requisite material for the efficient training of nurses, but would result in the production of a fraudulently hall-marked article.

Mr. Humphreys accuses me of contradicting myself when I say that the larger Infirmaries train their nurses thoroughly. It is difficult to argue with one who knows so little of his subject as to be unable to distinguish between a large Infirmary situated in the midst of its district and containing many acute medical and surgical cases and a small country Infirmary miles away from the houses of its patients.

The term "pioneer work" as applied to the efforts of the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association is simply a cant phrase, and the fact remains that it committed suicide because it had become so distrusted, and had, by the underhand methods of its nurses, excited so much antagonism that it could no longer continue its career.

I am, Madam, Yours faithfully,

F. S. TOOGOOD, M.D.Lond., Med. Supt.

The Infirmary, Lewisham.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—As one who has had considerable experience in connection with Nursing arrangements in Workhouses, allow me to say that in my opinion no improvement can be expected, generally, till the Local Government Board not only insist upon their 1897 Nursing Order being carried out to the full, but supplemented by a further Order placing the entire control of the Workhouse Nursing under the Medical Officer and the Superintendent Nurse.

I have found, in connection with other professions, that, as with trained nurses, it does not answer, and will not work to put the control of trained and experienced nurses in the hands of Workhouse masters and matrons.

I know that many Workhouse masters and matrons are excellent men and women, and such as trained nurses could work under without friction, although even with them the feeling of superiority would ever be present in the mind of the trained official. With the majority of workhouse masters and matrons, however, it is very different, coming as they do from a much lower class socially and educationally, and many having risen from the position of Porters, Labour Superintendents, Portresses, Cooks and Laundry Maids. Thus, when dressed in a little brief authority, it is perhaps not surprising that they should make the positions of a trained nurse or Superintendent an impossible one for any self respecting woman to hold.

Mr. Humphrey's proposal is a good one, and can with advantage be applied compulsorily to the small workhouses, and my suggestions as above, and then I am sure there would be no difficulty in obtaining good nurses, if proper salaries are offered, even for poor law work.

Yours,

POOR LAW GUARDIAN.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Having read the letter by Dr. Toogood in the NURSING RECORD, it struck me that his remark as to what is required of a nurse in a rural infirmary, viz., "to feed and keep clean some infirm people" would not apply to all such infirmaries. As a country Infirmary Nurse, I would like to quote a few cases I nursed in the sick wards of a rural workhouse. There were thirty-six beds and myself the only nurse. The following cases I had during the twelve months I was there. I append a list of cases who were nursed successfully. A girl of 17 years with dislocated hip and slight fracture of the acetabulum; she walked with crutches a few months and then was able to walk without. A small boy of 10 with fractured femur. One case of slight poisoning—that of one of the school children eating berries. Acute attack of quinsy in one girl and milder attack in several others, and two acute cases of pneumonia. Other cases requiring skilled nursing were Uræmia accompanied with fits; Asthma with heart attacks, these occurring every few days for nearly a month before the end came. Two cases of cancer requiring constant surgical attention. A case of acute Bright's disease. One of chronic rheumatism, with frequent heart failure owing to the treatment of opium to alleviate her pain. Several other cases of bronchitis and pneumonia occurred in the old people, and although these seldom recover they do require nursing. The Lying-in work was not heavy, but much depended on the Nurse, owing to the

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