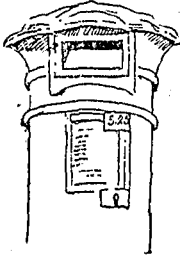


Letters to the Editor.

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 LIFE OF SIR JAMES PAGET.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read with such interest your review of the Memoirs and Letters of Sir James Paget that I have since obtained the book itself. Many of his readers will thank Mr. Stephen Paget for allowing them to gain an insight not only into the brilliant and distinguished life of his father in its latter years, but also into the difficulties and struggles which beset him at its outset. Its lessons must come home to many, and stimulate those who have not yet attained success, in whatever profession they may be engaged, to perseverance and pluck.

Being a "woman's woman" I have searched the book for all there is to be found on the "woman question," for the attitude of a great man towards the opposite sex has always a great interest for me. Sir James Paget's views in 1880 on the question as to whether women should be admitted to the International Medical Congress in London are, I suppose, characteristic of his dislike of a "row." He was "rather luke-warmly" in favour of their admission, but saw that there was a large and very loud majority against it. There would in any case be a row, but the row in the event of exclusion would be far less than in that of admission.

Well, this was thirty years ago, and we have moved on since then. But is the avoidance of a row the point of primary importance in the question? Surely the fundamental principle upon which to base all our actions is the consideration of what is just. The same point is apparent in his attitude to the Royal British Nurses' Association. "I have not studied any of the reasons of the dispute, or been near any of the meetings about it." Would that he had. If such men as Sir James Paget had but studied these reasons they would have voted "solid" with those who were struggling to maintain inviolate to the nursing profession that liberty which had been granted to it, but was in danger of being wrenched from it, and their presence at the meetings of the Royal British Nurses' Association at that time would have unquestionably prevented the unseemly scenes which characterized them under the domination of Mr. Fardon and Dr. Bezly Thorne, and will make them a bye-word to posterity for ever. At the same time, one cannot but recognize how distasteful any contentious question must have been to a man of Sir James' Paget's temperament and greatness. One can sympathise with, if one regrets, his dislike of even for a while stepping out of an academic and scientific atmosphere into a hotly contested polemical arena. One cannot wonder, though one regrets, that he did not do so.

A word from him to a member of our Royal Family, or to his colleagues at the head of his own profession, would have been powerful for good, but at least let us be glad that he did not give even the semblance of support to the disgraceful tactics of the Hon. Officers of the R.B.N.A. For which much thanks.

Faithfully yours, dear Madam,
A LATE MEMBER OF THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

PRACTICAL DISPENSING.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

Westminster College of Pharmacy,
Trinity Square,

Borough, S.E.

DEAR MADAM,—A short time ago you published an article of mine on Dispensing, in which I mentioned nurses could study the subject in three months.

Now, to meet the requirements which come into force on 1st January, 1902, it will be necessary to study, or at least do practical dispensing for six months previous to entering for the Examination.

As my article was the means of more than one nurse taking up dispensing, I thought others might be making plans to do so in the future, and at the present low rate of a nurse's salary it is essential that they should know some time previously what the expense will be, so I should feel obliged if you would kindly publish this.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

EMILY L. B. FORSTER,

In Charge of the Woman's Department.

October 21st, 1901.

NURSING PROGRESS.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—May I be allowed to express my pleasure that you are printing in full the valuable reports presented to the International Council of Nurses from the various countries where nursing exists. To the many who wished, but were, unable to be present at Buffalo at the time of the International Congress, it is a great satisfaction to be able to read both the reports of the International Council and of the Congress in the NURSING RECORD. The papers published so far have been full of interest, and I am eagerly looking forward to the publication of the rest. So far we have seen that with the exception of the pioneer efforts of Dr. Hamilton in France and Miss Turton and Miss Baxter in Italy, very little has been done to bring the standard of nursing in these countries into line with modern ideas. What a pity it is that the Religious Orders, to which the nursing of the sick in these countries has been largely entrusted, are pervaded by a conservatism so intense that progress under their control seems well nigh impossible. Surely in the government of these Orders there should be some arrangement made for development as time goes on. The slavish adherence to a rule which was in accordance with the spirit of the times several centuries ago is a fundamental mistake, and proves that in nursing matters at least these communities must either alter their standard, or in the interests of the sick be left behind, with the onward march of progress. How refreshing is the spirit which permeates Miss Dock's report of the Status of Nursing in the United States. It reveals a constant upward

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