



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.

IN PRAISE OF MORAL COURAGE.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I have noted with appreciation your remarks as to the high place which should be accorded to moral courage amongst the virtues. I suppose that the reason why the populace is swayed this way and that by any chance orator is that it is essentially pliable, having few fixed principles, and, consequently, as a mere matter of self-protection, it takes the line of least resistance. It is so easy to swim with the stream, so painful to buffet against it. But one must not forget that the populace is composed of the majority of man (and woman) kind, and that, consequently, the majority of persons, although capable of doing much excellent work in certain directions, are not to be depended upon when the exigencies of a given case demand that a stand shall be made, and an unpopular line taken. History has proved, over and over again, that those who decide upon this course must expect to be in a very small minority indeed. Witness the supreme tragedy of the world's history. Of the twelve Apostles one betrayed his Master for a paltry sum, under circumstances of the greatest treachery; another swore he had never seen Him, and the rest "forsook Him and fled." At the time of His trial there were none to stand by Him, though the twelve were all picked men, not by any means the average disciple. Neither does it appear that they were wanting in genuine affection or in faith in the Master to whom they were pledged. In these respects they had been tested, and their love had stood the test. Only, when they had to choose whether they would stand by a losing cause, or not, their moral courage failed, and even at the end only one of the twelve was found standing at the foot of the Cross. Can we then wonder that few exhibit moral courage at the present day? It appears to me that moral victories will always be won by individuals, or at the most by a few persons. The majority, now as ever, will follow the popular lead, and go with the stream. At the same time I cordially agree with you in hoping that the nursing profession may exhibit this most desirable of virtues in the crises of its existence. It has many virtues, so one is justified in hoping great things of it.

With all good wishes for the New Year, and with cordial thanks for many inspirations in the past,

I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A READER.

ACUTE MANIA AFTER INFLUENZA.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—May I be allowed to take up the cudgels on behalf of the nurse who was in charge of

the patient who died from "exhaustion from acute mania following influenza, greatly accelerated by burns," and to whose case you drew attention in the current issue of the Journal?

I do not personally know the nurse in question, but I do know for a fact that, until the patient suddenly leapt out of bed and ran to the fireplace, the nurse had no suspicion that he was likely to suffer from acute mania.

Possibly had she had asylum experience, premonitory symptoms *might* have been recognised; he was, however, an apparently ordinary case of influenza, and as such it was quite permissible, and, indeed, necessary, for her to leave his room from time to time during the night.

As soon as the nature of the case was known a second nurse was procured, and every precaution was taken.

Am I right in thinking that, as far as the nurse is concerned, this most unfortunate occurrence may be looked upon as an accident, rather than as an act of carelessness or want of proper attention?

I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A DEFENDER OF THE PROFESSION.

[We are glad to learn from the facts as related above that the nurse concerned was not to blame. We know of instances of acute mania coming on suddenly after influenza, and apparently the one referred to must be classed in this category, though this did not appear in the reports of the case. For the sake of the nurse we regret that the fact was not brought out at the inquest, and are obliged to our correspondent for bringing it to our notice.—Ed.]

MESSAGE BY THE BLIND.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Your article in last week's Journal, on Message by the Blind, interested me greatly, and I hope that the work of educating and supplying blind operators in massage may prosper. There are so few occupations open to these afflicted people, and it would seem as if they were very well qualified to become skilful masseurs and masseuses. We all know that, with the loss of sight, there seems to be compensation by the increased development of other senses, and the sensibility of the finger-tips is often very acute. This is an excellent asset to operators in massage; indeed, it is doubtful if anyone can become first-rate without it. The chief difficulty that I see which is likely to be met with is in the attendance of these operators on private cases—the most lucrative form of practice. If they stay permanently in private houses they must be to some extent helpless, and therefore a cause of anxiety, while if they pay daily visits it would seem that they must have an attendant to conduct them safely to and fro. The idea, therefore, that the central office shall be used for the reception of patients seems eminently a happy one. All success to the scheme!

Yours faithfully,

INTERESTED.

THE HOSPITAL NURSE'S PEDESTAL.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Of late years "the trained nurse" has served regularly as Aunt Sally for the public, and, indeed, Dr. Outtersen Wood need have no fear that she

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