



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.

SHOULD THE NURSES' HOME BE SEPARATED FROM THE HOSPITAL?

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

DEAR MADAM,—Will you kindly permit me, through the columns of your paper, to state that my experience teaches me that, while there may be some advantages, I consider there are a decidedly greater number of disadvantages in having a Nurses' Home at a distance from the grounds of a hospital.

Would parents approve of their daughters walking through the London streets in the early morning in the dark during the winter months when going to the hospital, and at night when returning to the Nurses' Home? I doubt it.

Should a special nurse be required during the night, would she be expected to make the journey from the Nurses' Home to the hospital alone?

Your Editorial so well expresses my views on the whole matter that for me to make further comment would be superfluous.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

AN INFIRMARY MATRON.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was greatly interested in your able leader in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING concerning the action of the St. Bartholomew's authorities, who seem to be going the right way to work to effectually alienate a great deal of pecuniarily valuable public sympathy. A Nurses' Home not in communication with its hospital is all very well in fine summer weather, but how about slush and rain and wind? A nurse's training is not an easy time at best, and it appears to me that the wettings and strugglings with inclement weather will put a last straw on the much-enduring backs of many otherwise suitable, capable pro's and staff nurses.

The Governors are probably entirely men. I don't think women would for a moment sanction such a hardship being put upon the nurses under their care. Another thing, where do they propose to quarter their Matron?

Surely, it is absolutely necessary for her to be within easy reach of the wards at all times. If she is in the hospital building, then, to a certain degree, she loses touch with and authority over her nurses, who, under the control of a Home Sister, are, when out of the wards, living out of her ken. One never quite feels the same respect and awe of a Home Sister that one does for Matron, whose moral influence can in this way be very great.

I think, too, St. Bartholomew's will lose a great many of the refined probationers of a superior class—women of good birth and education. It isn't as a

rule the woman with a cast-iron constitution who has the truest vocation for nursing—sympathy, tact, and other most necessary and desirable qualities being conspicuously minus.

I don't think the general public realises the hardship that will be imposed upon the nurses by this proposal. I hope it will be very clearly and definitely pointed out in the daily Press before the appeal is brought forward and money subscribed.

Bart's nurses hold such a good name that we—the ones interested in all that concerns the good of nurses—do not wish to see a less good or capable body of women taking certificates from Bart's than other London training-schools, because those schools possess advantages they can offer to their candidates. In other words, it seems as if the Governors of Bart's are putting a handicap upon it as an efficient training-school for first-class nurses.

I am, dear Madam,

Faithfully yours,

ONE GREATLY INTERESTED.

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

DEAR MADAM,—With the exception of Miss Mollett, none of your correspondents have a good word to say for the plan of dis severing the Nurses' Home from the hospital grounds, and, if I may be permitted to express an opinion, I think Miss Mollett's suggestions are not practical in connection with a large London training-school. Take, for instance, her recommendation for transport of nurses to and from the hospital in wet weather. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, according to the *Directory*, has a staff of some 240 nurses. Say that at least 150 of these would have to be conveyed, as she suggests, in 'buses; imagine what this means. An average 'bus holds twelve persons, so that an array of twelve 'buses at least would be required to do the work! Twelve two-horsed clattering conveyances rumbling up to the gates twice a day! Why, Little Britain would be blocked from end to end, or anyway the general traffic would be seriously interfered with. This plan seems to me quite out of the question. Then, again, Miss Mollett compares a nurse's work to that of typewriters, shopgirls, and daily governesses. She has apparently left out of consideration the difference of hours of work of these classes of workers. Day nurses and probationers must begin ward work at 7 a.m. in a busy hospital, if all the hardest labour is not to be done by tired night nurses; that means leaving an outside Home at 6.30 a.m., and leaving duty not earlier than 8 p.m. That means going and coming in the *dark* in the winter months, whilst the other three classes of workers seldom begin work before 9 a.m., and, as a rule, cease at 6 p.m., which just makes all the difference in rest and comfort.

Miss Mollett does not think the nurses would personally suffer by the in-and-out system. I think it would be a terrible risk to health. For many girls, to get chilled, damp and over-tired at any time is bad; at certain times it would be quite inhuman to turn girls out in all weathers. Looking at this question in relation to the general health of the nursing staff, I feel sure the hospital would incur great additional expense in nursing sick nurses and in having to keep a larger staff to supply the place of off-duty nurses, and, more-

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