



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 NURSING OF HIP DISEASE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I have read Miss Waind's article on the nursing of hip disease with much interest, but may I draw attention to a point she has not mentioned. The child should never be turned on its side during the course of its toilet. First the shoulders should be washed and dried, then nurse should support the pelvis with one hand, and the child should rest on its elbows and the remainder of the back can be washed, dried, rubbed with methylated spirit, and powdered most thoroughly and yet without any pain to the patient. The draw-sheet should always be put in at the top and drawn down—not rolled in from the sides, as nurses sometimes do. Attention to this detail saves much suffering.

I hope Miss Waind will excuse my differing from her as to the amount of weight to be used. I think up to eight years (unless there is acute pain) 2lb. will be found quite heavy enough; of course, if there is pain the amount of weight must be increased, but even in these cases a sandbag placed each side of the limb to steady it will often give more relief than the use of a very heavy weight.

I have never found it necessary to raise the end of the bed (except in cases of acute pain), and in district work it is a dangerous custom, as other occupants of the room are apt to knock against the bed and jerk it or throw it off the support. I have known this occur with disastrous results to the unfortunate patient.

Yours faithfully,

H. M. THOROLD.

Country Branch of the Alexandra Hospital for Children with Hip Disease, East Clandon.

[In the hospital where we were trained, and where one of the surgeons was a great authority on cases of hip disease, he always insisted that the cots containing hip cases should be made by two nurses. One raised the patient, maintaining the horizontal position as much as possible, the other changed the bottom sheet, and washed and powdered the patient's back. We think this procedure should always be adopted if possible in making the beds of hip cases.—Ed.]

AN OPEN CONFESSION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Miss Mollett, in her interesting article in your last issue, wonders what her colleagues look forward to in their old age, and says: "It would be rather interesting if we all made our open confession as to our secret desires. I expect most of us would be moved by the old earth hunger to go back to some form of gaining one's living from old Mother Earth herself." I confess that by the time old age is

upon me I hope it will not be necessary to earn my living. Surely those who have devoted the best years of their lives to nursing in its various forms should be able—either as a result of their own foresight and saving, or, if they are more happily placed, by means of a small assured income—to be able to spend a serene old age without the necessity for earning a living.

Dear old Mother Earth has many attractions, but I think after a spell of enjoyment one would wish to be back again in the heart of things. For my own part, I wish for nothing better than to live in a Nurses' Settlement in a poor and populous neighbourhood, where out of one's nursing experience one could be of use in manifold ways to the courageous, uncomplaining, and self-respecting poor. If only a few nurses, each possessed of a small income, were to join together with this object, it is difficult to estimate the good that might be done. I would build the house if possible, and it should have a common dining-room, drawing-room, library and writing-room, with cosy bed-sitting rooms for all the members. Then it should have a large hall where meetings, entertainments, &c., could be held. I would have a crèche so that the babies might be looked after while the mothers go to work, for many of them, poor things, have to leave their children to most incompetent care, and the aim of the Settlement should be to infuse some brightness into the lives of the people, as well as to promote a knowledge of the laws of health amongst them.

I do not, of course, wish to suggest that a Settlement of this description should be peopled by old women, but there are many nurses whose active working days are over who could render valuable work to the community in such a sphere.

Lastly, there should be no rules except such as are by common consent observed in every well-regulated household and are necessary for its due ordering.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

TWENTY YEARS A NURSE.

OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENTS AND MORTUARIES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was very interested to read your account of the fine new Out-Patient Department at Charing Cross Hospital. It is time that these departments of our hospitals were reorganised, and also utilised to their fullest extent as training-ground for nurses. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to pass through them know how much we have learnt there, while other, older, nurses constantly lament that in their day such departments were regions to which the probationers never penetrated.

Another off-shoot of a hospital which needs in many instances to be brought up to date is the mortuary. This, of course, can never be a show department, and so has, in too many instances, escaped the general improvement made with a lavish hand in other directions; but when we consider how much the poor think of the care of the dead, how they will even incur considerable debt themselves so that all honour may be paid to their dead, can we be too particular in showing them that we too are regardful of their feelings in this particular? I think not.

Yours faithfully,

OUT-PATIENT SISTER.

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