



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 STANDARD OF ARMY NURSING.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In answer to your letter of the 15th inst., I beg to inform you that a candidate for Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service must possess a certificate showing that she has received three years' training and service in a civil hospital recognised by the Advisory Board.

A candidate would not be qualified for the Service if she had spent part of the three years in private nursing outside the hospital.

The rule distinctly lays down that the training and service must be in a hospital.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

SIDNEY BROWNE.

War Office, 68, Victoria Street, S.W.

[In reply to our request for information in connection with a letter which appeared in our columns last week as to the standard of training laid down by the Board of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, the Matron-in-Chief has kindly furnished us with the above facts. We confess that we were unable to gather any other impression from the regulations of the Service, No. 3 of which states that a candidate must "possess a certificate of not less than three years' training and service in medical and surgical nursing in a civil hospital recognised by the Advisory Board." Miss Huxley was, therefore, entirely accurate when she told the Select Committee on Nursing that in the case of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, the custom was to bind a probationer for four years, two she spent in the hospital wards; "after that two years she was required to go out private nursing and earn a sum of money for the hospital—that is to say, by her fees," "the want of uniformity (in training) causes great injustice to these young women." "On more than one occasion the nurse wished, we will say, to join the Army Nursing Corps, and the first thing she was told was she was ineligible; because she had not worked three years in the wards of a hospital, her training was not considered sufficient, whereas if there was a General Nursing Council, who would lay down and define the term of training and what the education should be, all nurses would start on their career fairly."

Mr. Sydney Holland told the Committee subsequently that that had "been altered now," the regulation required "three years' training and service," and nurses "need not have been training all the time," but they must have been "three years connected with a hospital."

The letter of the Matron-in-Chief distinctly proves that the period of three years' training and service must have been spent in a hospital; there can be no

question, therefore, as to the ineligibility of a candidate who has spent part of the three years in private nursing.

We hope that this fact will be clearly stated to the probationers at the London Hospital, which is, we believe, the only London training-school in which the probationers are liable to be sent out private nursing for the benefit of the institution at the end of two years. The Chairman of the Hospital, we are well aware, has the interest of the nurses at heart; but he does not explain to them in his "Charter of Liberty" that by undertaking private nursing in their third year they are subsequently debarred from obtaining appointments in the Navy, the Army, and the Indian Army Nursing Services, and also for the higher posts under the Local Government Board. In all fairness, they should be informed of this when they are required to sign "a solemn and binding agreement" to give "two years' service on the Private Nursing or the General Staff of the Hospital, as the Matron may require," for the authorities are aware of the disabilities thus imposed, while a new probationer is not.

The Matron of the London Hospital is, we believe, the only Matron of a Training-school to whom the Committee have deputed this unlimited power over the future professional status of the women it admits for training.

Now that the three years' standard of training has been adopted by the Government Services, it is useless for the authorities at the London Hospital to maintain an obsolete standard, and they will be well advised to withdraw from their untenable position, and place the training of their nurses on a just and equitable basis. We think it would tend to lessen the confusion in the minds of some nurses if the words "and service" were deleted from the Army Regulations. Service at the London Hospital may mean clerical work in the office, which, although valuable experience for the certificated nurse, is not work for the probationer.—Ed.]

NURSING COLLEGE AT HARVARD.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Whether a doctor or a Superintendent of Nurses has been elected Professor of Nursing in connection with the New College for Nurses at Harvard does not really matter; what is of vital importance is the fact that the greatest American University has established such a college. Let us rejoice and be thankful. From home I hear that this new school will not be in connection with any other department of Harvard, but will be as distinct a department as the Law School and the Medical School. It will have an individual faculty and curriculum, and after successfully completing the four years of study the students will receive appropriate degrees which will give the holders rank as competent trained nurses.

Now, isn't that right on the spot?

An applicant for matriculation will not have to pass an entrance examination, but will have to prove his or her moral and physical fitness for the work. The real fitness will depend upon what will be termed a preparatory course, which will require at least nine months' work. This preparatory term will take up such preliminary work as domestic science, including house-keeping in its various branches. The first year students will have to learn sanitary cooking for well people and sick, sanitary bed-making, washing dishes,

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