

fluence, should be permitted to adopt a totally inadequate standard of nursing at their own sweet will for their poorer neighbours. I go further and say it is impertinence, and trifling with the lives of the helpless, and as far as I can gather, these ignorant and domineering persons are doing all the mischief they can in preventing justice being done to thoroughly-trained nurses by registration, and thus effectually protecting the poor from their ignorant patronage. I write strongly, because I do so from personal experience. I may have been unfortunate, but the fussy interference of a titled hon. secretary in the parishes in which I worked would have provoked a saint, which I do not pretend to be. I was directed to sleep in cottages where there was no decent accommodation. I was directed to take the temperature of an erysipelas patient whilst in attendance on two lying-in women. I was scolded because I insisted upon changing my lodgings because of the disgusting suggestions of mine host, and I was also expected to keep body and soul together and my personal apparel clean and hygienic, to say nothing of in repair, upon a sum the scullery-maid at the Hall would have considered inadequate for scraping potatoes. That "fine ladies" and "county magnates" sweat and overwork decent women out of sincere charity to the parish poor may be from want of "knowledge" and not want of "heart." But all I ask is that these ignorant people should not be permitted to act as a law unto themselves when it involves the suffering of others, just because we are a nation of snobs, and assume that the governing class is immaculate. Let us have Registration and a standard of nursing, and so prevent a vast amount of mischievous interference in matters concerning which the average layman knows nothing. I am of opinion that the poor in rural districts should be protected from quack nurses, just as they are protected from quack doctors.

Yours,
LATE DISTRICT NURSE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Though I am delighted to see that others take the same interest in district nursing I do, and that they have taken up the ball and set it going, yet they have not quite caught my meaning. I am sure I hope my letter will come before the notice of the members of the Select Committee, because they will then see why we are opposed to a lower class of nurse, but Government cannot compel dukes or landed gentry to be charitable. What we want our Government to do and to realise is that nurses hold the lives of men in their hands quite as much as doctors and chemists do, and that it is their duty to see that these nurses are qualified women, and that they are available for the sick poor, just as much as the parish doctor.

Yours faithfully,
EXCELSIOR.

DISCIPLINE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Miss Mollett's admirable article on "The Passing of the Matron" has led me to ponder on the contrast between the probationer of the present day and the one of twenty-five years ago. Which of us, I wonder, would have thought in those days of "running full tilt down a corridor shouting cheerily to a friend in front?" To begin with, retribution would

have been swift and sharp, and there would inevitably have been an interview with the Matron, entailing unpleasant consequences in the immediate future. But I really do not think it would ever have occurred to a probationer of that day to behave in so unrestrained a way in the precincts of a hospital. One might almost as well go shouting about a place of worship.

In a building devoted to the reception of the sick and the relief of pain, surely any probationer who behaves in this manner has a very faint conception of her duty to the patients whose service she professedly desires to make her work in life.

Are we losing the good old nursing instinct which taught us that the consideration of our patients was a matter of primary importance to which all personal affairs must be subordinated, and is there a danger of their being regarded merely as providing the means of a congenial method of earning one's bread? It is unquestionable that the discipline of home life has relaxed to an extraordinary degree of recent years, and that one of the first things which many probationers have to learn, and learn hardly, when they enter a hospital is that the universe does not centre round them, and that everyone else's convenience must not of necessity give way to theirs. This is an item of preliminary instruction which might well be imparted before they enter a hospital. It will be an ill day when the welfare of our patients does not instinctively enter into our consideration, influencing our conduct in all directions.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
OLD FASHIONED.

THE PASSING OF THE MATRON.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Many Matrons will have read Miss Mollett's sensible remarks with pleasure in last week's Journal under the above heading. The truth is there has of late crept into hospital work a tendency on the part of young Matrons to be personally popular with every fellow-worker rather than to be a first-class officer. That little bit of vanity is at the bottom of much of the lack of discipline amongst the present generation of nurses, of which we read so much. What many Matrons need is the courage "to do the work for which they draw the wage." I shall never forget your answer to an old Sister upwards of twenty years ago, when upon coming to "Bart's" you had the rules altered for the common good.

"This will make you very unpopular, Miss M.," said she.

"Miss M. is quite innocent," you replied. "Blame the Matron of Bart's; she is quite impersonal."

Yours gratefully,
AN OLD PRO.

A HOLIDAY HOME FOR NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I take the liberty to ask you if you can send to me the address of a holiday home for nurses not far distant from London and not at the seaside. I thank you very much in advance.

Best salutations,
LUCIE BERNHEIM (Nurse).

Cruc Navain, Toul, Meurthe-et-Moselle, France.
[We shall be glad to hear from anyone acquainted with a home likely to suit our correspondent. —ED.]

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