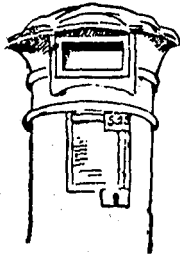


Letters to the Editor.

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.

COTTAGE NURSES' TRAINING HOME, GOVAN.

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

MADAM,—I observe in your issue of August 3rd a letter signed "E. A. Stevenson," commenting on a letter which Dr. Forbes Brown sent to the *British Medical Journal* last June, on behalf of the Govan Medical Association, dealing with the management and training of nurses in the Govan Cottage Nurses' Training Home. This letter from Dr. Forbes Brown gives an entirely false impression of the work carried on in the Home.

First, it is stated that "women with only a smattering of training are turned out of the Home certificated as midwives and nurses." This is quite untrue, as every midwife sent out from the Home holds either the certificate of the Glasgow Maternity Hospital, or that of the Central Midwives' Board.

Secondly, it is stated that "these cottage nurses endeavour to compete with highly-trained nurses." This is equally inaccurate. The nurses sent out by the Home never profess to be anything but cottage nurses trained according to the Holt-Ockley system to nurse the working classes and the poor. They are most carefully trained by an excellent, experienced Matron, who has herself had many years' hospital training, and holds the L.O.S. and the C.M.B. Many of the pupils are trained for eight or ten months, and none receive less than six months' training.

There is also no truth in the assertion that the nurses are taught to put themselves into competition with medical men. Quite the opposite is the case. When the nurses are sent to country districts it is on the understanding that they are only to nurse cases under a doctor, and they are always taught that their first duty is to carry out his orders implicitly. During their training in Govan they never attend any general cases of illness excepting under a doctor, and the Matron does her best to co-operate in every way with the local medical men. No certificate of any kind is given to a cottage nurse, until she has served a country association for three years to the entire satisfaction of the local committee and the country doctor.

Since the Training Home was started, about 80 cottage nurses have been trained in Govan, and sent to country associations throughout England and Scotland, and some to the Highlands and Hebrides. Excellent reports of them are constantly received, testifying to the good work they are

doing. Not a single complaint has ever been made of inadequate training. The country doctors under whom they work are quite satisfied with the nurses trained in the Home. These facts speak for themselves.

Hundreds of parishes throughout England and Scotland now employ cottage nurses working on the Holt-Ockley system, and the demand for them steadily increases, which is a sure proof that they fill a much needed want.

There is no doubt that these useful nurses of the cottager class are far more acceptable to cottager mothers than highly-trained nurses could ever be; as the latter, after the years they have devoted to their training, naturally do not like to waste their time in performing household duties; whereas the Holt-Ockley nurses are quite content to sleep in the cottages, cook the meals, and perform all domestic duties in place of the mother, if she is the patient. In rural districts, where cottages are often many miles away from any other habitation, these nurses do splendid work, and prove invaluable to cottager women in their times of need.

It must be remembered that, although a careful training is of paramount importance in constituting a good nurse, it is not always the length of training that achieves this result. Again, a so-called "fully-trained" nurse may lack the essential personal qualities which make or mar a nurse, qualities which no examination can test, and which, if possessed by an intelligent nurse with only a short training, may make her the better nurse of the two.

With the careful training that our nurses receive, they obtain quite sufficient knowledge of nursing to render their services an inestimable boon to the working mothers of our land, and a Godsend in times of illness to those who, without them, would have no nursing help at all, or, at best, only the assistance of friends without training of any kind.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

V. MONTRROSS, President.

Buchanan Castle, Drymen, Glasgow.

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

DEAR MADAM,—My notice has been directed to a letter by Miss E. A. Stevenson in your issue of 3rd inst., commenting on a letter from me which lately appeared in the *British Medical Journal* anent the management of, and the training received at the Govan Cottage Nurses' Training Home. As many of your readers may not have had an opportunity of perusing the letter in the *British Medical Journal*, with your permission, I would bring before them briefly a few facts concerning the Home.

The aims of the Home as stated in the printed Annual Report, are to provide nursing in their own homes for the working classes and poor in the district of Govan and elsewhere, and to train women as cottage nurses and certificated midwives for work in rural and other districts. The training is said to be done under what is known as the Holt-Ockley system. No nursing is done inside the Home, but lectures are delivered to the

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