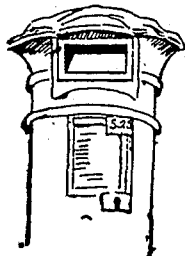


Letters to the Editor.



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.

EXCHEQUER GRANT FOR MIDWIVES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I should be deeply grateful if you would kindly correct a slight error which appeared in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING for May 30th in your next issue. At the annual meeting of the Council for the Higher Training of Midwives on May 21st I expressed an earnest hope that an Exchequer grant might be made to subsidise the salaries of midwives in scattered rural districts. I am not anxious to obtain such a grant for training purposes until it is more clearly proved that this matter cannot be adequately and successfully coped with by private benevolence. At the present moment it is, of course, neither adequately nor successfully coped with, but I continue to hope for improvement in the future.

Yours faithfully,

ALICE S. GREGORY,

Hon. Secretary.

Home for Mothers and Babies, Woolwich.

[We very much doubt this matter being adequately coped with by private benevolence, and there seems no sufficient reason why the training of midwives should be maintained by charity. We fear that means the least possible remuneration for a midwife's work. The work is indispensable, very arduous, and very responsible, and if in scattered rural districts midwives cannot make a living wage, then surely it is not contrary to precedent that the State should help the poor. The State provides parish doctors, medical officers of health, and sanitary inspectors. Why not parish nurses and midwives? The need for them is urgent, and our experience is that private benevolence is so apt to sweat the woman worker in return for training that the supply of really well-trained, efficient midwives will never meet the need—until "charity" ceases to meddle with their industrial condition, and they are justly paid for their labour.—Ed.]

DOES OBSTETRIC NURSING FORM PART OF A NURSE'S TRAINING?

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

DEAR MADAM,—Within the last year a small maternity department has been instituted in connection with this hospital. It is not possible that all the probationers can receive training in this branch, and I should like an opinion of what arrangement is usual, and how this important work can be most usefully and justly apportioned. If the work is given to those who pay, the most deserving probationers may be omitted, and yet in

general hospitals, as a rule, probationers do not receive training either in midwifery or maternity nursing.

Yours truly,

SUPERINTENDENT.

[If only a limited number of the probationers can pass through the maternity department why should the privilege not be given to those who gain the highest number of marks for practical ward nursing and devotion to duty, as apart from the theoretical examinations? As women invariably pay for training in midwifery and maternity nursing in special hospitals, and for private tuition, we see no reason why they should not do so in a general hospital. It is a costly department, and the experience is invaluable. The London Hospital charges twenty guineas. Parents should begin to realise that a little money must be spent in fitting daughters to earn their living. The average British parent will never grasp the fact that "nursing" necessitates highly specialised tuition and that it is a skilled profession, unless it costs something.—Ed.]

THE DUTY OF THE MOMENT.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I agree with you that the duty of the moment for all nurses, especially those who are matrons, and to whom nurses naturally turn for help and guidance, is to come out and join the Society for State Registration, and be ready for future attacks upon their liberty of action. Twice this year already have matrons and nurses tasted of the danger to personal liberty, which co-operation upon the part of the courageous few has averted. If that few had stood aside what would to-day have been the position of Fever Matrons under the hob-nailed heel of John Burns, or of trained nurses generally under the mediæval legislation carefully prepared in the reactionary Directory Bill? Our enemies count upon the apathy and ignorance of nurses as a whole. It is time every matron and nurse realised that it is her duty to know, and her duty to act. If disastrous legislation is ever effected a future generation of nurses will not hold blameless the Laodiceans in the nursing world—the women with the non-political parrot-cry, who are usually well placed themselves, and who are too timorous or narrow-minded to tackle the political situation.

Yours truly,

SELINA C. HOPKINS.

London.

"LETTER NO. 15."

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

DEAR MADAM,—I note that in your criticism of "Letter 15," you say that it is sent to all the nurses trained at the London Hospital. This is not so. I never receive a copy although I was trained and worked there for several years, and have held my present position for several more. I am unaware that I have done anything to forfeit connection with my training school, beyond the fact that I am known to be in favour of State

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