

CORRESPONDENCE.

* * We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by Correspondents. Brevity and conciseness will have first consideration. See notices.

HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—The subject brought upon the *tapis* by "Sister Despair's" letter is one which is of great importance to those Nurses who aspire in the future to fill the position of Matron. There is no doubt that the women most fitted for this responsible post are those who, before being trained as Nurses, have had the benefit of a good practical home training where they have become conversant with the details of household management and housekeeping. But, failing this, it would be wise for women when their Nursing training is complete, and who mean to qualify themselves for the post of Matron, to attempt to gain some subordinate post under a thoroughly experienced housekeeper in a hospital or public institution, and there, being content to begin at the root of the matter, acquire knowledge by daily experience. Women in all ranks of life are far too apt to imagine that they are endowed by nature with the invaluable knowledge which can be gained by experience alone. They hesitate to give the necessary time and trouble to learn a profession or business, and are then surprised to find that they are considered by practical people unfitted to be entrusted with responsibility. The majority of women for the future must work, if they intend to eat. The halcyon days of husbands, provider of all their needs, is to a great extent a dream of the past, and in recognising this stern fact, they must be content to do as men have done, learn the A.B.C. of their employment before attempting to practice it.

Few hospitals have an income sufficient for their needs, and true economy can only be practised by those who have a thorough knowledge of business, so that money's value may be obtained; again, the Nursing staff of a hospital is now recruited from a much higher social position than formerly, and, in consequence, Nurses require that their domestic surroundings should be somewhat more refined. It will be easily understood, therefore, that in order to conduct her department so as to satisfy the finance committee and the inmates of the hospital, a woman must possess real practical knowledge not only of Nursing but of household management, and just as she considers it necessary to spend some years in acquiring a complete knowledge of the former art, so she must earnestly apply herself, for a stated period, to become thoroughly conversant with the details of the latter.—
I am, &c.,
THOROUGH.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—"Sister Despair's" letter has called forth many letters, all more or less expressive of dissatisfaction concerning Hospital house-keeping in general, and showing how essential it is that a committee, in select-

ing a Matron, should consider it their duty to patients and Nurses to be convinced that she has a knowledge of household management. But I should like to record that during the 12 months I was an inmate of the Special Probationers' Home attached to the oldest Hospital in London, I never once heard a complaint concerning the food from any of the thirty-nine women, who were my companions, for various terms during that time. The system pursued in the management of the Home was excellent. A Sister presided, whose whole time was devoted to her duties in connection with it, and who was an exceptionally good housekeeper and entirely *self-taught*. I think I am right in stating that her right hand, the cook, was at one time a Ward assistant in the Hospital, and had acquired her power of providing us with tasty, hot, and appetising food from the careful *personal* instruction of the Sister, having had very little previous knowledge of cooking. What is required in a Home Sister, is not a vast store of knowledge as a housekeeper, so much as that she should be interested in her work, and *personally superintend* the details of her department. For a woman possessed of average common sense, it becomes an easy matter to satisfy those for whom she has to cater.

At the Home I allude to, we sat down about twenty, to meals, a great variety of wholesome, well-cooked, well-chosen food being provided. The appointments of the table were also very nice in every particular, napkins, tablecloths, glass, and cutlery, were always clean and bright, and added greatly to our comfort and satisfaction, and all was accomplished without any fuss or scolding. I observed the Sister was greatly respected by her subordinates, and implicitly obeyed by them, in fact she was a sympathetic, practical, capable woman, whose daily aim was to perform her duty to the very utmost of her ability, and an invaluable servant to the Institution fortunate enough to have secured her services.—Yours, &c ,

A GRATEFUL PROBATIONER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—I hope "Justitia's" letter in reply to Sister Despair will be widely read by Hospital authorities. In any Hospital of upwards of one hundred beds, where a Nursing School of any size is likely to be attached, there is no doubt that the Matron requires an assistant, if her duties are to be efficiently performed. Let this assistant have a complete knowledge of house-keeping; the Matron will then only have to superintend the domestic management and will have time for her more important duties in connection with the Nursing of the sick, for whose benefit, by the bye, Hospitals are built and maintained.—Yours truly,

A COUNTRY MATRON.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—I am a certificated Monthly Nurse (Q.C.H.) and having three months disengaged, am desirous to obtain an insight into Hospital or Infirmary Nursing. If any of your readers can tell me of the best means of doing so, I would be very glad. I would be glad to

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