

Nursing Echoes.

* * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.*



WE have received several letters from Nurses interested in the subject of Comparing Notes, expressing themselves in favour of the column and throwing out fresh suggestions. Miss JANE HARDING writes:—

“I think Miss MAUD SMITH’s suggestion of devoting a portion of the NURSING RECORD to Nurses, in which they could compare notes, and so exchange experience of work and practical hints on Nursing treatment, would prove both useful and popular. It appears to me that we Nurses might gain much knowledge through such a medium. For my part, I should be more interested in the practical hints than any other form of notes. “Beds, Baths, and notes on the Feeding of certain cases of illness and operations, would form interesting items if conducted in a simple and chatty manner—so that all might join in without effort and special literary talent—the scheme would prove most beneficial to patients as well as Nurses.”

“A Private Nurse” writes:—

“I am highly in favour of ‘Comparing Notes.’ We Nurses in private work so soon find ourselves rusty in these progressive days, and the practical experience of Nurses in special Hospitals would prove vastly interesting. In private work, one sorely misses the discipline, and up to dateness of Institution life, and one dreads becoming ‘gampy,’ as, in appearance (and presumably in work), so many Nurses one meets have become. Yet, on the other hand, a Nurse soon gains valuable experience in a private house in the line of economy. It would be well if students and probationers could be more impressed with its virtue and value during their ward training. ‘Public money’ has such an irresponsible and limitless sound, that one seldom grasps the fact that all waste is wicked, and causes inevitable want. The grandiose manner in which flannel and domette bandages are slit up in many of our training schools is only typical of the lack of attention to details in Nurses which is complained of by Matrons in the Council column. It is not altogether the fault of the individual Nurse, the fault lies greatly in the national lack of thrift in the class of women who now occupy the position of Sisters and Nurses in our Hospitals, but I hope to say a word on this subject when the time comes to discuss question 4, viz., ‘What is a Trained Nurse.’”

ANOTHER Nurse suggests “a discussion on comfortable clothes and uniforms,” and another on the “value of cleanliness, and how to be clean.”

BUT why anonymity? We know from experience how diffident are Nurses, as a class, in expressing their opinions at professional meetings, and we own that the first sound of one’s own voice speaking in public is a very appalling sensation, but this reticence can be carried too far, and develop into stupid self-consciousness. What Nurses

want, is to cultivate a habit of reflection upon matters concerning them as a class, and the power of expressing simply, and without affectation, *vivà voce* or by letter, their opinions on these subjects. Who, that has attended the Sessional Meetings of the R.B.N.A. for the last five years, is not familiar with the nods, and winks, and twittering whispers between members, all, doubtless, pregnant with valuable suggestions, and the bald result of many an invitation to “address the chair”? Let us acquire knowledge, powers of concentration, habits of thought, sense of public duty, and then speech—simple, direct, convincing—will speedily follow.

MISS DE PLEDGE, Matron of the Chelsea Infirmiry, has consented to deliver a course of lectures on Nursing at Blackheath, in aid of Belmont House, a Home for poor gentlewomen, founded by Miss KEENE.

OF the making of Private Nursing Homes there is no end. Miss ELLEN JEWSON is about to open one at 7, Avenue Road, Regent’s Park, “For the Dietetic (Salisbury) and other treatment of Chronic Diseases.” A new departure about this Home is that it has a visiting physician attached—Dr. ARCHIBALD KEIGHTLEY, of Queen Anne Street. We are glad to observe that Miss JEWSON is a trained Nurse, and as she “has herself obtained a new lease of life from the Salisbury treatment of rheumatic arthritis,” we hope her patients may be equally fortunate.

AN Infirmiry Matron informs us that at a recent election of a Charge Nurse, the Board decided that the remuneration should depend upon the certificates of the Nurse appointed. The selected candidate was awarded £5 more salary because she was a member of the Royal British Nurses’ Association. This is a practical method of recognizing its status.

THE report of the meeting of the General Committee of the Dorset Health Association gives food for reflection. The aim of the Association—the nursing of the sick poor in rural districts—is commendable; but we very much doubt if a system which reduces the Nurse, both by organization and petty remuneration, to the position which a well-educated and self-respecting domestic servant would hesitate to occupy, will prove of ultimate benefit either to the poor or to the Nursing profession. We are strongly of opinion that of all the

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