



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.

"HOW THE POOR DIE."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I am glad you are helping to expose the disorganised condition of Nursing matters in many of the State Hospitals, both in England and Ireland. Things here are simply appalling, and as the religious question necessarily enters into the subject, we shall meet with far greater difficulty before our poor can be efficiently nursed, than you will over the channel. The following case has lately come under my own observation.

A young woman of good position and education, of about 24 years of age, who was head teacher in an institution in Ireland, contracted typhoid fever, and for ten days was nursed at the institution by two trained Nurses, one by day and one by night. She had the fever very favourably and was going on well, but two ladies of the Committee of Management persisting that there was danger of infection for the children in the institution and against the wishes and advice of the doctor and Nurses, insisted on having her removed to the Fever Hospital—which was the Workhouse Fever Hospital, there being none other in the county—and which was nursed by the paupers, superintended by a Matron of the old type who knew little or nothing of the science of Nursing. Paupers were this young woman's companions in the other beds of the ward in which she was placed, and these beds were so closely packed together that not half the cubic space necessary for the health of each individual was allotted to them. The mattresses were bags of straw, and every day this poor young woman was made to get up and sit by the side of her bed while it was being shaken up and re-made by the paupers. To those who understand the danger of such a thing being allowed in typhoid fever as getting the patient out of bed, such an act must be looked upon by them to have been almost criminal, but then it was allowed through ignorance, these pauper "Nurses" knowing no better.

This is one sample of the Nursing which this typhoid fever patient received, and what was the result of such disgraceful Nursing? Death! In her death the institution in which she served so conscientiously and faithfully for so many years, lost a valuable officer.

At whose door did her death lie? Surely at the door of those responsible for the proper and efficient Nursing of the sick in Unions—the Guardians of the Poor.

Yours faithfully,—AN IRISHWOMAN.

COUNTY COUNCIL LECTURERS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I was very much struck by a letter which appeared in your last number detailing how one of the "quack nurse-teachers" had unblushingly confessed in the presence of a Lecturer and Examiner of County Council

teachers, that she was so completely nonplussed by a plain and simple question on the part of one of her audience as to the method of applying whitening to burns.

It has often occurred to me that it is surely not in accord with the ethics of the medical profession for qualified and registered practitioners to assist in the manufacture of sham Nurses? Surely it must occur to these gentlemen that there is not so much difference between a quack doctor and a quack Nurse; and that the amount of harm a quack doctor can do is very limited compared to that which may be accomplished by the sham teacher, who may, in the course of a year, give most dangerous advice to ten thousand, and even more, people. I regard this as a question most seriously affecting the public health, and I shall look for some official action on the part of the Royal British Nurses' Association to protect the nursing profession from being brought into the open contempt which is liable to fall on it through the incapacity of these Lecturers.

I also think some questions should be asked of the medical men who give the lectures, and *who sign the certificates* qualifying women to teach nursing when, to the absolute knowledge of these medical men, some of the candidates have not had a day in a Hospital, while others have taken a three or six months' "training," perhaps in a Cottage Hospital, or in an Infirmary, frequently where the Matron herself is uncertificated!

I think these medical men should look to the honour with which they wish the public to regard them, and that they should be the first to *refuse to sign a certificate* qualifying a woman to become a Nurse-Lecturer until they have evidence that she has had at least three years' training in a large and efficient Training School.

Sincerely yours,

PROFESSIONALISM IN ALL THINGS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—While heartily agreeing with your correspondents, "Trade Unionist" and others, it is only fair to remember that if Technical Education Committees or their organising secretaries recognised it as one of their duties to find out *what* qualifications are requisite for lecturers on Nursing from the heads of the Nursing profession, we should find ere long that the profits of pseudo-philanthropic (really commercial) societies dealing in "diplomas" vanish into thin air, and with them all desire to interfere with legitimate workers. Some County Councils have already done this, and while making every proper inquiry, are also willing to recognise the fact that the *skilled* labourer is worthy of her hire.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

NIL DESPERANDUM.

BICYCLES FOR NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I saw the other day that the District Nursing Association at Darlington has received a present from a manufacturer of a lady's bicycle, for use by one or any of their district Nurses. And it seemed to me such a practical gift, that I am tempted to write and ask if any definite conclusion has been arrived at as to the propriety of district Nurses riding the ever-popular "two wheelers."

Duchesses indulge—and even Royal Princesses—in this simple mode of locomotion, and it would seem very hard if we over-worked parish Nurses were to be denied—on grounds of its not being proper—this delightful and non-fatiguing mode of locomotion.

Now I am myself a rather accomplished "wheeler," and I have a beautiful machine at home, but I am rather doubtful if my Committee will allow me to introduce my wheeling propensities into the village district in which I am Nurse. There is one thing I have found out from private and uniform dress rehearsals at home, and that is, if district Nurses are to be allowed a free use of bicycles our dress will have to

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