

I did *not* move an amendment that the emoluments of the Matron of the Infirmary be reduced to £100, the same as those of the Matron of the Workhouse. On the contrary, I moved (I quote from the printed minutes of the Board) "That the report be adopted, except that the £100 be substituted for £120, as the value of the emoluments of the Matron of the Workhouse." This I did because I felt it was clear that the emoluments of both Matrons were about the same. May I point out that your remarks seem to have been made under a total misapprehension, no suggestion of reduction of salary was in question at all. The Guardians were merely putting a value for the purposes of the Superannuation Act on what was received in the form of lodging, food, etc., so that no question of the value of any services rendered could come in.

In reference to your remarks as to my need of enlightenment, as they are founded on a misconception, I need take no notice of them, especially as I am certain that no one who is acquainted with me or my work could fail to know how much I appreciate the good work done by the trained Matrons we now have in our best Infirmarys, or how sincerely I think the post one of the greatest responsibility and importance.

I, of course, rely implicitly on your making my statement as public as the one you have (I have no doubt inadvertently) published. I have only now seen that in your paper you state "a woman Guardian has made strenuous efforts to reduce the salary of the Matron of the Kensington Infirmary." Will you kindly contradict this if it refers to me as absolutely untrue.

I remain, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

81, Onslow Square, M. C. BRANDRETH.
Nov. 11th, 1896.

[We regret that the newspaper paragraph from which we quoted so mis-stated the matter as to have given rise to this misapprehension. We are glad to find how much the self-denying work done by many of our Infirmary Matrons is appreciated by Mrs. Brandreth.—ED.]

REGISTRATION OF MENTAL NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have to thank you for sending me a copy of the NURSING RECORD of November 14th, and for the fair and temperate remarks you make with regard to the registration of mental Nurses.

I should like to state that I brought this matter before the Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association entirely on my own responsibility, and I wish to emphasise the opinion I have all along held, that Asylum Nurses should be admitted to the membership of the Royal British Nurses' Association as a distinct branch of Nursing, and not with the view of opposing, or in any way clashing with the interests of the Hospital-trained Nurses, as one of your correspondents seems to fear, nor had I any knowledge of the intention of the Executive to alter the formation of the Registration Board to which you refer, until I saw it on the agenda.

I am anxious also to assure your correspondent, "Registered Nurse," that nothing could be further from my intention than to "flood the register with untrained lunatic attendants!"—(the initials are mine) and thus encourage them to compete with trained Nurses." What I desire is, that the Royal British Nurses' Association should admit as members Asylum-

trained Nurses, skilled in tending the sick insane, as a distinct class.

I look upon Asylum training and Hospital training as two distinct branches of Nursing, and I fully agree with your editorial note, "There is no doubt that it is mental Nurses who in the future will be required to attend upon the unfortunate persons suffering from various diseases of the brain," but you should rather have said "who are *now required*," for they are in daily demand.

What claim then have trained and educated Asylum Nurses, of both sexes, to be admitted members of the Royal British Nurses' Association? I advocate their admission on the following grounds:—First, mental cases will not, and cannot, be undertaken by Hospital-trained Nurses; second, mental and nervous cases are with us in large numbers, and are the most difficult of all to treat, requiring special training on the part of the Nurse; third, the Nursing of these cases is as important an element in the treatment as in any other form of disease.

Now, to meet the requirements of these cases, it is absolutely essential that the Nurses should be efficiently trained, and that training can only be had in a properly equipped Hospital or Asylum for the Insane, where all classes of cases are admitted.

But the question may here be asked, What guarantee have we that the training has been adequate in point of tuition, experience and efficiency? The Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland, which was founded in 1841, has for many years past instituted a rigorous curriculum for the education and training of Asylum Nurses of both sexes, by courses of lectures by the medical staffs of asylums, by demonstrations and practical teaching in the wards, and by examinations written, oral and practical, in proficiency in Nursing, which include, in addition, the subjects of Elementary Anatomy and Physiology, &c., &c., in fact an examination which is in no way inferior to any examination for Hospital trained Nurses. To those who are found proficient a certificate is given, and they are entered upon the register of that Association. It is upon these grounds I have asked the Royal British Nurses' Association to extend a hand to them and join them in the common sisterhood and brotherhood for nursing all classes of suffering humanity, giving them, if need be, a separate place in the register of the Royal British Nurses' Association and a distinctive badge.

From the kindly remarks you have been good enough to make in your Journal I am encouraged to think I shall not have asked in vain.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

T. OUTTERSON WOOD, M.D.,
Senior Physician West End Hospital
for Nervous Diseases.

November 17th, 1896.

[We are much obliged to Dr. Outtersson Wood for sending us this interesting letter on this important subject. We received it as we were going to press and delayed publication in order to insert this letter as a matter of fairness, as we have commented on the other side in another column. We feel sure that Dr. Wood will agree with us that so vital a question ought to be fully considered, both by the Registration Board and by the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, before any definite steps are taken.—ED.]

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