



## 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.*

### LETTERS ADDRESSED TO MISS WINGFIELD.

#### THE REGISTRATION OF ASYLUM ATTENDANTS AS NURSES.

Fleet, Hants.,  
January 5th, 1897.

DEAR SIR,—I regret being unable to attend the meeting at St. Martin's Town Hall, which I understand is convened to consider the proposal admitting Asylum Attendants to the Register. I wish to protest against this measure with all the weight of my twenty-five years' general practice and experience.

The medical profession has for a long time laboured under great disadvantages in respect of its Nursing staff, which is chiefly evident in the great difficulty in finding an appropriate Nurse for a given case. In large measure this difficulty has been removed by the Royal British Nurses' Association, where we have the confidence of being provided with a Nurse who has passed through a proper curriculum of training. To admit Asylum Attendants to the Register, who for the most part are untrained and uncertificated, will assuredly go far to destroy the confidence of the profession in this Association, and would seem also to defeat its chief object and *raison d'être*.

Believe me to remain,  
Yours very truly,  
HENRY WILCOX, M.B.

To the Chairman of the Meeting,  
St. Martin's Town Hall.

MADAM,—As it is quite impossible for me to be present at the public meeting convened by you on the 7th January, I sign the resolution to be presented to the meeting on the following grounds, and shall be obliged if you will be good enough to read my letter at the meeting.

My reasons for entering a strong protest against the suggestion to admit to membership and place upon the Register of Trained Nurses male and female Asylum Attendants are:—

First, I am of opinion that no person can be an efficiently trained Nurse who has not had practical experience of nursing the sick in the wards of a General Hospital.

Second, I consider to place upon the Register of Trained Nurses those who have not had this practical experience, is a distinct breach of faith and contract with those nurses who have conformed to the regulations for membership and registration now in force.

Thirdly, I consider that no alteration in the regulations relative to membership and registration should

be made without free and full discussion by the members at a special general meeting of the Corporation.

I am, Madam,  
Yours very faithfully,  
CHARLOTTE OKELL, M.R.B.N.A.,  
Late Member of the General Council.  
Matron, The Infirmary, Bridgewater.

DEAR MADAM,—I trust I am not too late to enter my protest against the admission of Asylum Attendants on the Register of Trained Nurses.

In my opinion, the strongest argument against their admission is that allowed by the Asylum authorities themselves, in this fact: That they do not appoint to any post of superintendence or authority any person not fully qualified in a General Hospital under the universally accepted term of three years' training in addition to the necessary qualifications in their special branch as Asylum Attendants: this I consider conclusive.

I have my information from a fully-qualified Asylum Attendant, who after six years' good work in two of the first Asylums, could not obtain an appointment in any Asylum without first training in general work. She came to me for six months to gain an insight into gynaecological work, of which branch she was entirely ignorant, as also of many points in the nursing of acute disease.

May I draw your attention to the misleading uses of the words trained and untrained, as applied to Nurses and Attendants? I take it that Asylum Attendants are as fully trained in their own department as the three years' certificated nurse, and so can hardly be designated as *untrained*. Could they not be allowed the benefit of their special training, and the word *untrained* be omitted?

I cannot protest too strongly against their admission under the present circumstances, and regret being unable to record my vote personally on Jan. 7th, as it will be impossible for me to leave Brighton.

I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
ETHEL C. PARRY, M.R.B.N.A.,  
Matron.

Hospital for Women, Brighton.

DEAR MADAM,—I, for one, beg to *thank you* for taking up this matter and doing your utmost to prevent such a scheme. It is quite impossible for me to attend the meeting, but I most earnestly endorse your appeal in protesting against such a scheme as placing Asylum Attendants upon the Register of Trained Nurses. What is our Association coming to?

I am, dear Madam,  
Yours faithfully,  
ALICE CHAPMAN, M.R.B.N.A.

District Infirmary, Ashton-under-Lyne.

MADAM,—I am truly sorry that it is impossible for me to attend the meeting on January 7th, 1897. My professional duties alone prevent my attendance. Medical men who have gone through their courses would object very strongly to chemists or dentists joining their Association as members, why then should the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association allow untrained Nurses to enter their Association.

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