



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.

NURSES À LA MODE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Hotel Beausite, Rome,

February 4th, 1897.

MADAM,—I have read with great indignation the article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Lady Priestley on "Nurses à la Mode." Having had personal experience of trained nurses, I feel bound to protest against such wholesale condemnation of a class of hard-working, conscientious women. It is surely unfair to quote isolated cases of unprofessional conduct on the part of nurses as representative of the whole community.

Those whom Lady Priestley seems to have met could hardly be classed "highly trained," as, if they had been, they would have known and fulfilled their duties better. Perhaps Lady Priestley has never been fortunate enough to be nursed by thoroughly trained nurses, such as those who are sent out by the Registered Nurses' Society.

It is in the houses of the so-called "Upper Ten" that nurses meet with their greatest difficulties, and, this being the case, it is not to be wondered at that many honourable women prefer hospital or district work to nursing in private houses. Lady Priestley's article may do good by opening the eyes of the public to the fact that, until State registration becomes obligatory, no one can be safe from the danger of being nursed by such persons as Lady Priestley describes. I feel sure there are many who, like myself, will read with great satisfaction your able reply in the *Nineteenth Century* to Lady Priestley's most unfair criticism.

Yours truly,
GERTRUDE HIGGINS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

London,

February 4th, 1897.

DEAR MADAM,—We four nurses (who happen to be on duty at the same hotel) wish to express our thanks to you for your admirable reply (in this month's *Nineteenth Century*) to Lady Priestley's most misleading article. Entirely through the suggestions made in that article, one of the undersigned has been placed in a most awkward position. We wonder if Lady Priestley has any idea of the harm such an article can cause. We much appreciate what you have done for us.

We remain,

Yours faithfully,
S. BEATRIX FARNSWORTH.
SISTER MONICA.
NURSE BLOOMFIELD.
C. E. FARROW.

[The name of the hotel is omitted, as the public are so sensitive about sickness.—ED.]

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Elm Cottage, Crondall,
Farnham.

Feb. 5th, 1897.

DEAR MADAM,—Your reply to Lady Priestley in this month's *Nineteenth Century* is simply splendid. I only hope that every nurse will have the pleasure of reading it. You are indeed the nurses' champion.

With many thanks from

Yours, very gratefully,
H. JANET WARE.

DANCING AND DEATH.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was glad to see, in last week's NURSING RECORD that the weight of your influence was given against dances in hospitals and infirmaries. Even the most ardent disciples of Terpsichore must acknowledge, if they pause to consider for a moment, that a dance, in a building professedly devoted to the relief of the sick and dying, is most incongruous and out of place. Nero's celebrated action in "fiddling while Rome was burning" is scarcely more open to censure, or to be condemned as wanting in all sense of the "fitness of things," than is that of hospital authorities who countenance dances within their walls. Let nurses dance by all means if they like, but out of uniform, and outside the hospital gates. One can always be sure that the NURSING RECORD will take a sound, practical, common-sense view of such subjects, as well as of the fact that the moral tone which it inculcates is of the highest. We nurses must prevent such travesties as that of Mr. Hall Caine having a substratum of truth.

Yours very truly,
AN APPRECIATIVE READER.

THE TREATMENT OF THE DEAD.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Inasmuch as it has been proved by innumerable cases of mistaken death certification that all the so-called signs of death (with the single exception of advanced putrefaction) are unreliable, it behoves us to take infinite care of the earthly tenement, to treat it, in fact, as if life were known to be existent, and to refuse to dispose of it, until death is absolute. The necessity for reform in our treatment of the so-called dead, and for the prevention of burial alive, is obvious. Medical men are much too prone to judge by appearances, which have so often proved deceptive, and the unfortunate victim of death-like trance, after a superficial examination, has been pronounced dead, and treated as such. In a monograph by Dr. Franz Hartmann, who has devoted many years to the study of this important but, until lately, grievously-neglected subject, the author says:—"Now, what generally takes place when a person dies? However much such a person may have been beloved while he was living, as soon as he is believed to be dead he is regarded as a nuisance that ought to be removed as quickly as possible. The apparently dead person, who may be in a state of full consciousness, but unable to resist, is dragged from his warm bed or room and placed in a cold room upon a board or upon straw;

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