

and their families, attempt to do so socially, and snub and patronise the nurses in consequence.

I think your readers will appreciate my arguments.

Yours faithfully,

A LATE MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

THE INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have watched for some time with keen interest the fight for fair play which is going on against the present officials of the Royal British Nurses' Association. That any women among nurses themselves can allow themselves to be worked as puppets by wire pullers against the interests of their own great profession is to me an inconceivable thing, and almost beneath contempt. But do you not think that the question of State Registration is one in which the interests of the general public, even more than those of nurses, are at stake?

Why should we have nurses foisted upon us who either from want of training, or want of character, are unfit for their duties?

It is only a short time since that a friend of mine (uncertificated) went to a certain Institution, wishing for further instruction. She was sent out to nurse private cases where the whole responsibility fell upon herself. She demurred. "I am not fully trained," she said, "and the patients will naturally object to me."

"Oh, the patients," was the matron's answer; "They are not likely to ask questions, and if they do, say that you *are* trained."

Another friend, whose father was dying at the time, wrote to a nursing institution, which shall be nameless, for a trained nurse. The person sent, proved utterly incapable through intemperance. She was dismissed, and my friend, very properly, as I think, wrote a letter to her matron complaining of her utter untrustworthiness. She received a reply, saying that she had no business to make such statements, and had laid herself open to an action for libel.

Now, if nurses were on a State Register, we should know who was capable and who was not, and if we chose to take an untrained nurse the fault would at least be our own if mishaps occurred.

I think, therefore, and I hope you will agree with me, that though State Registration is important for the best interest of nurses, it is more important still for the public, and I do hope that my fellow women will gradually recognise this fact, and insist with all their power that State Registration we must have.

Yours faithfully,

A LOOKER-ON.

A PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—“Matron” touches on a question of management about which I have found a difficulty in the past. It must be owned that permanent night duty is very trying, and I think it is inevitable that the work of a permanent night superintendent should deteriorate; she gets too much into a groove. If there is also an out-patient sister, exchange of work would be beneficial to both, but I have found that by making the night superintendent's post a stepping-stone to

that of ward sister, a year seldom passes without such a vacancy occurring, by which means the night sister works contentedly and well. It is also well during the holiday season to let the night sister relieve the day sisters in turn, and place the senior staff nurse on night duty. The experience and change of work is good for both.

Yours truly,

ANOTHER MATRON.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was very glad to see “A Matron's” letter, under the above heading, in the RECORD of last week. She explains her difficulty clearly, and at the same time offers a most practical solution of it. Oh, happy night sister to have an out-patient sister to change duty with every few months. I am glad “Matron” sees how difficult it is to go on for ever doing night duty.

The advice I ask is, what is that night sister to do who has no one to change duty with? I have held the post of night sister for over two years, and know how impossible it is to go on for ever and for ever without a change. It is difficult, at best, to get proper sleep during the day, and one's health must suffer in time from want of sleep, and long hours of night duty. I am far too tired to dress and go out in the morning after twelve hours' hospital. Consequently, one gets broken down in health, and feels old, and can take little or no interest in what is going on in the world outside the hospital walls. People seldom think the night sister needs a change. She is always expected to be up to time, of course; there is no excuse for her; and she must put in a cheerful appearance at day-nurses' breakfast and night-nurses' meals, and great surprise is shown if sister looks cross. The only remedy we have is that we can resign, which is not always desirable or convenient.

We come to you, Dear Madam, when we need really practical advice, for former experience teaches me that, if there is a way out of the difficulty, you will find it. I cannot think you will find a way out of it in this case, for the staff of my present hospital consists of matron, night sister, staff nurses and probationers. I know there are many others in the same difficulty as myself. One gets into a narrow groove, and can usually think of only two things, viz., going to bed and going to hospital. Under these conditions, health (and I am sorry to say, temper) must suffer in consequence. I read of reforms going on in the hospital world, such as nursing reform, registration, Midwives Bill, &c., but they all seem to belong to a time in which I used to live. But I will not continue my tale of woe, or you will be saying, like the matron of Martha's Vineyard, “You are not fit for nursing, miss.”

I know that I do not suffer alone, for there are many other night sisters who long, like myself, for the time to come when

“The nights shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs
And as silently steal away.”

I trust you will pardon me for making such demands upon your patience and time.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A POOR OWL.

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