

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Careful readers of the NURSING RECORD are beginning to form the opinion that it is time that some step should be taken to facilitate a Conference amongst those members of the profession who are really inspired with a sense of professional responsibility, and who are, therefore, anxious to discuss the situation. I am not a member of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and see no benefit to nurses in joining it, as at present conducted. I want real benefits, and feel sure we can obtain them by co-operation. I have talked the matter over with several nurses, and we all think that we might form ourselves into a society, with definite objects. We feel sure the RECORD would help us, as it seems the only nursing paper that does not pooh-pooh a sense of laudable ambition upon the part of a nurse. We want something done to give us professional protection, something to prevent our uniform being used for immoral purposes, as it now is in "massage houses," and the West End streets, a scheme for mutual help, and we think if entrance to the society could be obtained by examination, in conjunction with testimonials of moral character, it would be a beginning. Surely we could have a yearly Conference, as the American graduates do, and discuss our own affairs quietly, without interference and intimidation; then we might help with the Nursing Exhibition, and become affiliated to the National Council of Women, and thus come in contact with women working in other spheres.

I am country trained, and from what I know of my late matron, I feel sure she would be in sympathy with a movement in which women could quietly help one another. Anyway, we might make a small beginning, as it is quite evident the matrons of the hospitals who joined the Royal British Nurses' Association to further progress, must either support the doctors of their hospitals, or stand aside and do nothing, and it is also evident that the Association is being used *against* our true interests, and not for them.

Hoping you will see your way to call a meeting to discuss the question,

I remain, yours truly,

R. C. P.

[It is intended shortly to hold a meeting of members of the Royal British Nurses' Association to discuss the present position of their affairs. If the Royal British Nurses' Association refuses to further the objects for which it was founded, no doubt those who founded it for definite purposes will associate themselves to attain those purposes by other means. The Hon. Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association cannot imagine for a moment that by capturing one Society of Nurses they will prevent trained nurses working for professional progress and reform.—ED.]

ABUSE OF NURSES' UNIFORMS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I am so distressed to see by the remarks in your last issue on the subject of the dress of a trained nurse, that this is no safeguard against insults in the streets of London, as it ought to be. Can nothing be done to distinguish trained nurses from women who have no right to the title at all?

As you are always ready to stretch out a helping hand to any nurses who are anxious to promote the welfare of their honourable profession, could you not suggest some scheme to protect a nurse's uniform from abuse?

Up to the present time I have always felt protected by wearing the badge of membership of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and in the good old days, when the Corporation used every effort to help its members, I should have written to the Committee on the subject; but under the present management, as nurses are, alas, too well aware, such action would be useless; like every other suggestion for our good, this has been taken up and allowed to drop again without any result. Indeed, under the present condition of affairs in the Corporation, it seems no longer possible to wear the badge with any pride.

Are we to go on as we are until we get our much-desired State Registration? or will you not, Madam, come to our aid as usual, and help us out of the difficulty.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A BONA-FIDE NURSE.

[This is a question on which we have received several letters from time to time; and it is a very difficult one to deal with; we should like to hear from any nurse who has definite facts and information. Uniform is worn by "massage decoys," so that we fear out-door uniform is now held in little repute amongst the most abandoned section of the community.—ED.]

A PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—I noticed in the NURSING RECORD of last week, under the heading "A Practical Difficulty," a question asked as to a matter of nursing management; perhaps, therefore, you will kindly allow me to ask another, which is this: How can the matron of a small cottage hospital, who is single-handed, ever get off duty? In many cottage hospitals the matron is so situated, and it appears to me that a conscientious woman can never be free from the strain of her work, night or day. The difficulty is especially present to me just now, as in the village where my own home is, a cottage hospital of six beds is about to be opened, and the question therefore presents itself for solution. The village is a small one, and the inhabitants cannot, I am sure, afford to pay and keep two nurses, besides supporting the hospital, and yet it does not seem right that the matron should never be relieved. The only thing I can suggest is that one or more girls living at home, with little to occupy them, should go to the hospital for so many hours a week, and in time should occasionally be made responsible, while the matron is off duty, but perhaps some one who has had practical experience in working a small cottage hospital can suggest a better plan.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours, &c.,

HOSPITAL NURSE.

[Will some of our readers who have experience in this branch of nursing, give "Hospital Nurse" the benefit of their opinions.—ED.]

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