



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.

IS NURSING MANLY?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with much interest various letters in the NURSING RECORD on the subject, "Is Nursing Manly?" and have observed that many good and valuable points have been raised by your correspondents. I cannot, however, overcome a keen regret that such a question can be seriously discussed, especially in a woman's paper. We women have suffered long and grievously from the opposite kind of question—"Is this or that Womanly?" and from the public opinion which the answers have created. We have discovered that studies and occupations which would be unsuitable, and, therefore, unwomanly, for many women, may be the best means for bringing life and soul and womanliness to some other women; and we refuse nowadays to consider anything unwomanly which can be honourably and (from a character standpoint) profitably pursued by any woman of us all. Does it not then ill-become us to discuss "Is Nursing Manly?" My own opinion is that only a very small minority of men are suited by capacity and inclination for nursing. But I should feel myself unworthy of the new privileges which these later years have given to women if I helped to raise the obstacle of unmanliness between the men of that minority and the profession for which they are suited.

Yours truly,

ALICE M. WACKRILL.

38, Portland Street, Leamington,
12th October, 1897.

THE SCREEN QUESTION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad one of your correspondents has drawn attention to the disgusting lack of decency still practised in some hospitals, by lack of a proper provision of screens for ward use, and which when provided are such lumbering and heavy things that to save carrying them from bed to bed nurses sometimes attend to patients without them. This should be very strongly deprecated by matrons and sisters, and light screens, which can be easily lifted, provided. I have a distinct recollection of getting into hot water when a probationer, for allowing a stalwart and kindly medical student to carry round the screen for me. This was "nurses' work." I am glad to say, however, the outcome of the reprimand on the subject was the means of banishing from the wards screens far too heavy for women to drag about, and their replacement by chintz-covered, washable, bamboo screens, which were both light and sanitary. Whilst on the question

of screens, will you tell me if you consider it decent or necessary for a young nurse on night duty to be requested to hold the candle whilst the house surgeon passes the catheter on a male patient? This was constantly done in the male operation ward of the hospital where I was trained, and I was considered "mighty particular" because I refused to remain inside the screen for this performance. I have also constantly seen the visiting staff throw back the bed clothes and expose patients indiscriminately before nurses and students.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,

DECENCY.

DISTRICT NURSING AT MAIDSTONE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I travelled down to Maidstone a few days ago, hoping to be permitted to work in the district—as all the papers reported that this very critical duty was being performed by male volunteers—and you can imagine how keenly disappointed I was upon being politely refused work. In your report of the nursing of typhoid fever at Maidstone in last week's issue, you make a special comment upon the wisdom of the arrangement of having as many trained nurses on duty at night as in the day in the emergency hospitals, so why is not this system being carried out in nursing in the districts? I for one would willingly be placed upon night work in a district. Of course we all recognize the terrible strain on finances incurred by the employment of such a regiment of nurses as are now needed in Maidstone, but the employment of a still greater number may mean the saving of many precious lives, and already death has had his full share of victims.

Yours truly,

A TRAINED NURSE.

JUSTICE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was interested to observe that in last week's NURSING RECORD you advocate—with your usual justice—that Indian-trained nurses shall have precedence in obtaining appointments in the Indian Army Service, provided they are as fully qualified as candidates for these positions who have been trained at home. This condition is, of course, essential, in the interests of the sick; otherwise, it seems only fair that the claim of Indian-born people should be considered first for Indian appointments. In the reverse case, I am sure that there would be—and justly—an outcry amongst English nurses if the appointments in our own Army Nursing Service were filled from the ranks of candidates trained in colonial hospitals, however high their qualifications might be. I am especially interested in this subject, as a friend of my own, who was a nurse before she married, has recently returned from Ceylon, having brought with her a Eurasian as-nurse to her little boy. My friend speaks most highly of the capacity of this woman, and says that the whole-time she had the care of her boy she never had a moment's anxiety. Now that she has an English nurse-maid she finds things very different; the latter is good of her kind, but "has not the head" of the Eurasian. If Eurasians are competent and trustworthy, there:

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