

CORRESPONDENCE

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

- *.* We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by Correspondents. Brevity and conciseness will have first consideration. See Notices.
- *.* British Nurses' Association.—We are requested to state that Miss Wood (Secretary) will be at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W., daily, from 10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.), to see Nurses or others who may wish to make inquiries. Also that at present the Annual Subscription for Nurses is only half-a-crown, but that in a short time an entrance fee of five shillings will be charged. All Nurses desiring to join are therefore advised to write at once to the Secretary for an Application Form, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope for the reply.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—Several Nurses in this Hospital would like to express their thanks to Miss Meyrick for her kind and womanly letter, printed in your last issue. All she writes is true, and I don't doubt many Matrons agree with her. But what is to be done when the Matron has no power over the housekeeping department, and when her Nurses are dependent upon another official for any degree of comfort in their daily life. I for one am expected to head the dinner table and carve for the Nurses; but the housekeeper is responsible for the provisions and cooking, and resents any complaint or interference on my part, the result being that, whether the food is burnt or raw (and somehow it is never the happy medium between the two), it must be served. There is the same annoyance with regard to the Home arrangements. Over dirt and untidiness I have no control; and if I know two Nurses to be unsuitable for companionship, I have, nevertheless, no power to prevent them being sent to sleep in the same apartment. Does it not strike you that the position I hold is utterly false?—Yours very truly,

A NONENTITY.

[We shall reprint next week the latter half of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's paper on "The Matron," in which we observe that the above question is discussed with the decision and common sense for which she is celebrated.—ED.]

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—As I see you are at last explaining to Nurses . . . the Pension Fund, I send you my correspondence with it. I think you ought to have told Nurses more about it. . . . If you would only ask them to do it, lots of Nurses could tell you the same thing as I have.—Yours respectfully,

A NURSE.

[We have been obliged to delete some of the expressions, &c., used by our correspondent, but add her documents to many similar ones we are constantly receiving from Nurses, who have been persuaded into joining the Fund. We shall be glad to receive any information, confidentially, from any of our readers, about any of their friends who have joined the Fund, or have been in correspondence with it. Originals, not copies, of letters must in each case be sent; but we will make no use of them without the owner's consent.—ED.]

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—All who were present last night, to hear Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's admirable definition of "The Matron," must have felt grateful to that lady, for so fully explaining the varied qualities requisite for the post. Nor were they over-stated, as to be Matron in one of our large Hospitals is perhaps the highest and most far-reaching position a woman can attain. The fortitude and patience necessary, if governed by deep womanly feelings, will probably succeed in establishing a good and agreeable management; but towards that success, the governing bodies of Hospitals require to contribute. Allow me to suggest that, having chosen their Matron, they at all times remember she is only a woman, consequently in need of their support and advice; whilst her strength and nerves, upon which very much depends, should be cared for, by a recognised permission to take twenty-four or thirty-six hours off duty when she wishes.

A few words were said about the grievances of Probationers, particularly of those styled elderly. It is well known that Probationers are a "difficulty" with which a Matron has to deal. To do so effectively requires the assistance of the whole Staff; and it was once my duty, as Night Superintendent, to see that Probationers did not linger on the stairs, and arrive late in the Wards. Owing to their ignorance of perfect obedience and punctuality, Probationers imagine themselves subjected to indignities; but one of the many benefits to be anticipated from the "British Nurses' Association," as a body, is that their high principles will frighten away the unsuitable, and draw into the profession those women only whose capacity and sympathies render them fitted for Sick Nursing. Let us hope that the description of qualities required in a Matron, so clearly given forth last night, may incite Hospital Committees to seek out such women for their vacant posts, and encourage aspiring Matrons to cultivate the high standard set before them.—I am, Sir yours obediently,

G. R. A.

Feb. 16, 1889.

 REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mrs. Campbell.—We should strongly advise you not to allow your daughter to apply to the Training School you mention. A feeling of dissatisfaction concerning it, is becoming very general. The Children's Hospitals, at Pendlebury, near Manchester, or Myrtle Street, Liverpool, would suit, if she is fortunate enough to find a vacancy.

Nurse Ellen.—Probationers are now admitted at the Chelsea Infirmary, Cale Street. Apply to the Matron.

Sister Margaret.—We have inquired, and are told that a lady, who is connected with the paper you mention, has been present at the Meetings; so, doubtless, she is the "esteemed correspondent" who furnishes the reports which you object to as "malicious," and not a member of the British Nurses' Association, as it is suggested.

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