



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.

'THE OFFICIALS' ORGAN.'

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have read the report of the last General Council Meeting, both in the RECORD and in the *Nurses' Journal*. The grandiloquent speeches of Dr. Thorne read very finely until one recognizes the fact that, as one of the editors of the *Nurses' Journal*, he can shout at length. It would be interesting to know if Dr. Fenwick was accorded the privilege of placing his views before his fellow members, through the medium of the *Journal*. I doubt it. I consider the report of the last Council meeting in the *Nurses' Journal*, gives, as it is intended, an altogether wrong impression of the proceedings. I suppose we "nurse members" may be thankful that we are permitted to have any report at all in our "officials' organ," for which we pay.

Yours,

M. R. B. N. A.

[The manipulation of the *Nurses' Journal* is a disgrace, and it is well termed the "Officials' Organ," and will remain so as long as the Association is governed by the "Middlesex vote." A more brazen and unconstitutional job than the packing of the Council by the staff of this hospital, has never been conceived and supported by persons holding responsible public positions.—ED.]

SHEEP.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—It was with the greatest satisfaction that I saw, in your issue of last week, the comments upon the proposed new Bye-Laws of the Royal British Nurses' Association drawn up by the Members' Rights Defence Committee. I, in common, I believe, with many other members of the Association, have long desired some such comment, and the placing of the old and new Bye-Laws in parallel columns makes the differences very clear. It seems as if it would have been the natural thing for the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association to have placed the Bye-Laws before us in this way with their reasons for the alterations they proposed; we could then have studied them, and tried to understand the need for the alterations, many of which appear arbitrary and ill-advised, not to say unjust and wrong. As the Association has not taken this course I am very glad it has been done for us by the Members' Rights Defence Committee. It is, as you know, quite impossible for anyone, possessed only of average intelligence, to grasp in the least what is being done at a meeting of our Association in these days. The one object seems to be not to give us information, or to arrive at the opinion of the members upon their own

affairs, but to obtain their votes as a necessary matter of form, and to use strong pressure to secure these upon matters which have been already decided for them; and the sheeplike propensity of the majority of nurses unhappily makes this possible. Those, however, who desire to understand their professional obligations, myself amongst the number, are indebted to the Members' Rights Defence Committee. We have heard, by the way, no more about the new Bye-Laws. The February issue of the *Journal* is strangely silent. I thought we were to have the annual meeting of the Association early in the new year, when, the new Bye-Laws being passed by the Privy Council, and in force, the "small and turbulent section" might be effectually disposed of once and for all. Is it possible, just possible, that there are things, even in Bye-Laws drawn up by the sub-Committee, whose names, it seems, it is improper to inquire, which require alteration? I am beginning to think that it is even so, and am anxiously awaiting further information on the subject.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

M. R. B. N. A.

NAPPING AT NIGHT.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I am surprised at anyone suggesting that it is permissible for a nurse to sleep whilst on duty, as does "Nurse Mary" in the last issue of the NURSING RECORD. Surely a nurse placed on night duty realises that it is her duty, just as it is the duty of a soldier, to be true to her charge, to watch and guard for a certain number of hours. That those hours may be too long is very likely, but this opens up another question. A nurse placed on night duty must never permit herself to sleep; if she does she is unworthy of trust.

Yours truly,

NIGHT SISTER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Might I also ask if it is an unforgivable sin for a nurse to nap on night duty? You are aware that several of our leading abdominal operators insist upon one nurse attending to one patient night and day. These serious operations, as you know, are in a critical condition for many days and nights; how is it possible for one nurse to attend to these patients, say for even the first week, *without sleep*? And if she does not do so the patient runs certain risks. The truth is the nurses who undertake the entire charge of bad operations do sleep systematically, and if the surgeons demand superhuman feats from mere human beings they must know that the nurse is often asleep when she should be on the watch. I once argued the point with a very great man indeed, and his answer was, "I forbid you to sleep until the patient is convalescent, or I must obtain another and more *unselfish* nurse. I object to a change of nurse it disconcerts the patient." There is something sublime in this attitude of mind—"I say it, that is enough. If you are not able to circumvent the natural law, well, you are not up to My standard!" Of course such exaction upon the part of a surgeon results in wholesale degeneration upon the part of a nurse; sleep she must, *but she must never own it*. If an inquiry into nursing matters takes place, I hope you will bring evidence before the Committee of this

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)