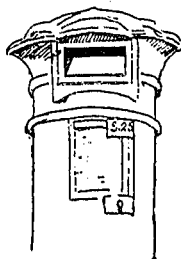


Letters to the Editor.

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.

NURSES ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I quite agree with your correspondent, "Trained Nurse," that Nurses for active service, and indeed *all* Nurses should be selected for appointments by "women experts." The fact appears so self-evident that it would be ludicrous to insist upon it if we were not made aware of the necessity of doing so by the painful failures which occur so frequently, just because this step is not taken. Is there any other profession, I wonder, in which candidates are selected by those who have had no personal experience, and consequently possess no competent knowledge, of the necessary requirements. Firstly it takes a woman to understand a woman, a man notoriously is influenced by her personal appearance, and personal worth weighs far less with many men than a smart appearance. I heard a nurse say the other day, "The next appointment I go in for, I shall be particular to have a new and well-cut tailor-made dress, and a pretty hat, and I shan't bother about testimonials, one's costume is a far more potent factor in obtaining a post than certificates of merit." I am afraid it is even so. Secondly, surely a woman, who has begun as a probationer, and worked her way up to the head of her profession, is more qualified to know what is required in a nurse, and consequently makes a better choice of one for any given post, than a man who has not had the same insight into nursing matters. Surely there can be no question about this. I know at any rate that many nurses feel strongly that some of the best people are passed over when appointments are made, simply for this lack of the nursing element upon the board of selection. I fully believe that if Male Departments once availed themselves of the help of ladies qualified by their position and knowledge to sit upon the boards which select candidates for nursing appointments, the effect of such a measure would be to bring so much additional prestige to the departments so organised that there would be no question as to the permanence of such an arrangement, the only wonder would be how they managed to get on so long without it.

I am, Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
A WOMAN'S WOMAN.

UNJUST CRITICISMS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Friends of those Sisters who are so bravely nursing the plague in India, and who read with so much pain the adverse criticisms, which they know

in many cases to be unjust, will welcome your remarks on the subject in the NURSING RECORD last week. For the credit of their co-workers I quite agree with you that if any Sisters have proved that the confidence placed in their discretion has been abused by all means let their resignation be required. But I cannot help thinking that such cases are the exception, not the rule; and that the unkind attacks which are made upon the Sisters are largely the outcome of jealousy. In any case, it would be kinder, and juster, to wait for the return to England of the Sisters before making statements about them which cannot possibly be disproved in their absence. Having a friend amongst the Sisters, and knowing what a splendid woman she is, I feel strongly, upon this subject. I wonder how many of the people who criticise and find fault would be willing to come forward and offer to nurse plague patients themselves? They must not forget that the Sisters who do so are risking their lives every day, and though no doubt this is no more than a nurse's duty, and they would be the last to wish any "fuss" made about it, yet their critics may well be asked if they would be willing to take their place. As for the rules published in your issue of last week, nurses have the remedy in their own hands, and no doubt they will use it.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours truly,
INDIGNANT.

HOSPITAL LAUNDRIES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—The paper on Hospital Laundries which you published in the NURSING RECORD was of great interest, for I think that all Superintendents will agree that the care of the linen in a hospital is one of the most onerous of their duties, and one which, in spite of all the trouble they take, costs them much anxiety. If there is a laundry on the premises, of course, matters are simplified, as the Superintendent can more easily keep control of it; but when, as is usually the case, at any rate in smaller hospitals, the linen is sent to a public laundry—the trouble of keeping it accurate is great. I have tried to minimize this by requiring that a responsible person shall always accompany the clean linen when returned, and count it over with me, according to the list sent, and note any inaccuracies; but even so mistakes do occur. I must say, however, I was somewhat staggered at the number of pieces of linen lost annually being given by one hospital as 1,095. What do the Committee say?

The whole question of linen bristles with difficulties. To begin with there is the new linen, a certain quantity of which must be obtained for each ward and for the household each year. It comes home in due course, and is by no means "up to sample." Where to find a marking ink which shall neither burn holes in the linen, nor wash out, is by no means an easy matter to solve. Then there are the chemicals which destroy one's good sheets, and lastly there is the ever present difficulty of keeping the lists accurate—that is to say, of losing no linen. Wherefore, a paper dealing with the difficulties and experience of others on this subject is specially welcome.

Yours faithfully,
SUPERINTENDENT.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)