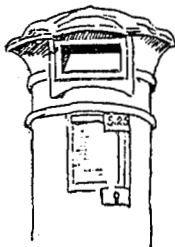


**Letters to the Editor.**

NOTES, QUERIES. &amp;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.*

**COMPENSATION.**

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
Municipal Offices,  
Earle Street,  
Crewe.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desirous of bringing forward, at the Sanitary Institute Congress next month, the question of compensation in some form or other for the loss of life of nurses in fever hospitals controlled by local authorities, and I would like to enlist your support and help in the matter. This compensation might take the form of the payment of all funeral expenses (medical attendance, etc., of course being provided gratuitously by the hospital medical attendant) and the payment of six months or one year's salary. I have had suggestions made to me that local authorities should be compelled to insure all nurses engaged by them on the permanent staff, and should pay the premiums for such time as the nurses stay with them. There appear to be several objections to this which are quite apparent.

I should be glad if you would give me any information of places where any of the above arrangements are carried out, and particularly as to the statutory powers under which the thing is done.

Do you know of any nurses' sick funds or burial funds through the medium of which nurses can make some provision for themselves in this matter?

Any other ideas or information you can give me will be most highly esteemed. Possibly if you threw open the correspondence columns of your interesting paper we should be able to get some valuable information.

I am,

Yours faithfully,  
MEREDITH YOUNG.

[Perhaps some of our readers will give us their views on this matter.—Ed.]

**MATERNITY TRAINING.**

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Your columns are always open for the discussion of matters of interest to nurses, and I therefore venture to write to you upon a subject which it seems to me has been by no means so fully discussed as it deserves. I refer to the question of training in Maternity Nursing as part of a nurse's course. We are constantly hearing that monthly nurses and midwives are untrained in general nursing. I admit this is wrong, but whose fault is it? They go, knowing nothing of what constitutes a training, and they find that they can take a certificate in monthly nursing in

from six to eight weeks, and in midwifery in about three months—and they do it—and launch out into the nursing world as "trained." Who can blame them? They know no better, and they may well argue that they would not be certificated unless the institution which trained them considered them efficient. Then, on the other hand, is any sort of encouragement offered to nurses who have received general training to add a knowledge of maternity work to their qualifications? Is it not a fact that there is scarcely a single training school which makes any provision for its nurses acquiring this knowledge? My experience goes to prove that if a nurse desires to know anything of maternity work—anything of the washing and dressing of infants even, she must make up her mind to leave her training school in order to enter a Maternity Hospital and obtain, and pay for, the necessary instruction. Over and over again this is proved to be the case. Until therefore our General Training Schools encourage their nurses to obtain Maternity Training and afford some facilities to those who are desirous of doing so, even if they do not make a certain amount of obstetric work obligatory in the course of a three years' training, I cannot feel very severely towards the midwife who has only the special knowledge, though I do deplore her existence. I feel that we have a right to look to the training schools to lay down the necessary curriculum, and if they decree, as they do practically by providing no maternity training for their pupils, that this work is not in the province of the trained nurse, then who is to do it? Somebody must; for just so long as the world exists will women be needed to attend their fellow women at this time. If the training schools decline to educate them, then they naturally fall back upon a special training at a special hospital, with the result in many cases that, possessing only the "little knowledge which puffeth up," they launch out into depths which the well-trained nurse would shun as entirely outside her province. For the well-being of the nursing profession, for the welfare of that large section of the community who are so greatly dependant upon woman-kind in their hour of need—for it must be remembered that a doctor cannot, even if he would, perform the duties which a woman, trained or untrained, must render to the maternity cases, the exigencies of his work, and the time at his disposal do not permit him to do so—I do urge that those responsible for training nurses should afford, at least to those who desire it, facility for acquiring a knowledge of midwifery. The difficulty which always presents itself to me, whenever I ponder over this need, is that so few of the heads of our training schools, so far as I know, possess this special knowledge, and it is therefore exceedingly difficult for them to realise the great desirability of providing instruction in it for their pupils.

Nevertheless, I hope the day may come when this will be done. I hope that trained nurses, who already possess this special training, will urge the necessity for it upon other nurses in season and out of season, and I hope that the duty of providing the public with thoroughly trained Maternity Nurses will be urged upon the heads of our training schools. If once they realize that their duty to their pupils and to the public, with regard to this matter demand that they should give it their earnest attention, the question will cease to be a difficulty.

Your truly,  
NIL DESPERANDUM.

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