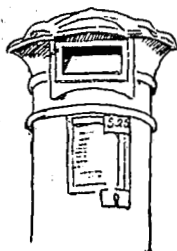


Letters to the Editor.

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.

A QUESTION OF DISCIPLINE.*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

MADAM,—I was exceedingly sorry to see the letter signed "Matron," in the NURSING RECORD of October 22nd. From this letter it would seem that Matrons and House-Surgeons are generally enemies. It is certainly not my experience. I have been House-Surgeon to two London and one provincial hospital, and have always found the Matrons very pleasant and reasonable women to work with.

I think Matron's case is one which might very well have been settled amicably, within the walls of her hospital. In reading the letter carefully, one will, I think, see there are errors on both sides. The House-Surgeon was not courteous or tactful in his dealings with the Matron, and the Matron appears to have been afraid to assert her indisputable right, *i.e.*, of turning the House-Surgeon out of the Nurses' rooms. The majority of provincial hospitals have printed rules defining the duties of their various officers.

As regards the respective positions of Matron and House Surgeon, I do not think there can be much doubt, so different are their respective duties. The Matron in most institutions has the control of the nursing and female domestic staff, and also the cleanliness of wards and linen to attend to, but in anything connected directly with the treatment of the patients, she must be guided by the doctor in charge.

The House Surgeon, in the absence of the visiting staff, has entire charge of the patients, whatever his age may be. If he is not capable, then the Board should get someone who is. Seeing that he is responsible for the condition of the patients, he ought not to be hampered in any way in his treatment by an officer who is not held responsible. The Chairman and members of the Board are often responsible for misunderstandings amongst the officers, especially in provincial hospitals. The House Surgeon or Matron, as the case may be, makes very firm friends on the Board, and is apt to pour his or her complaints and requests into their ears outside the Board Room, and obtain promises that never ought to be made except by the Board as a whole. This, I am sure, often leads to jealousy and a bad feeling among the other officials. I sincerely hope that Matron and House-Surgeon have settled this little dispute in a friendly way. If not, then I am afraid there is no other way than to lay the whole affair before the Board and seek their advice in the matter.

M. D.

A JUSTIFIABLE GRIEVANCE.*To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—Mrs. Talbot Coke's kind little letter will be warmly appreciated by the Army Sisters, wherever they read it, and as this lady's husband has held high positions in the Army, it is to be hoped that they will both bring their influence to bear in the right quarter on this very important question of the exclusion of the Nursing Sisters from participation in the late Soudan Campaign. You are well aware that necessary discipline in our ranks prevents us doing much in our own interests or defence, we are, therefore, all the more indebted to the NURSING RECORD for bringing our justifiable dissatisfaction before the public and thus to the notice of the War Office. All honour to the NURSING RECORD for being the only paper to support our cause.

The work done on the *Mayflower*, the hospital ship equipped by the English Red Cross Society, is acknowledged to have been timely and excellent; and as a charitable Society, it was justified in sending to Egypt what trained nurses it chose; but the fact that two of these ladies returned to England with the wounded soldiers on the Government troopship *Jelunga*, while the third is still in Cairo assisting the Royal Army Medical Corps, constitutes a very real grievance to the Regular Sisters of Her Majesty's Nursing Service who have been kept at home, and one which, I hope, you will point out as justifiable to the readers of your excellent journal. It may also interest your readers to know that we have been unable to lay our case before the Medical Department of the War Office *through the official source*, although it has been the privilege of that Department to learn of our just grievances through your editorial championship.

ANOTHER OLD CAMPAIGNER.

A SINCERE COMPLIMENT.

WE get many communications concerning professional nurses, in our various capacities, but none has ever borne the hall mark of sincerity more plainly than that sent us by a little patient now being nursed by a member of the Registered Nurses' Society. As such, we print it:—

"To the Registered Nurses' Society.

DEAR LADY SUPERINTENDENT,—I am nine years of age, and have been in bed two years of something the matter with my heart, it is not very bad. Please put this into The NURSING RECORD.

Yours Sincerely,

ROBERT SCHAW MORE.

P.S.—I have not had any help in this at all.

R. S. M.

God will bless the Nurses,
He will help them in trouble,
For they are Sisters of Mercy,
Giving you physic to make you well,
And play with you all day.
Yes, they are jolly Sisters, and
God will bless the Nurses.

R. S. M.

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