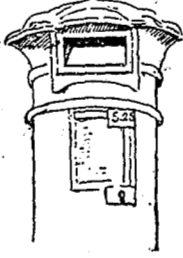


Letters to the Editor.

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' MANNERS.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Many persons will sympathise with "An Onlooker" in her experience of the lack of good manners amongst the nursing community and her experience is by no means singular. People, as a rule, are now totally lacking in good manners—it is a rough and ready age—but one would imagine that if refinement and kindness were to be found anywhere we should find them habits of the nursing sisterhood. But it is not so—bad manners, gaucherie, and real right down rudeness, flourish *in excelsis* in hospitals for the sick—as one who visits these institutions is well aware. In how many public charitable institutions can you rely upon civility from the head officials? My experience is from very few, so that one is not surprised upon entering a ward to be met by serious lack of courtesy upon the part of Sisters and nurses. I had lately occasion to visit a poor girl in one of the hospitals for women; she had undergone a most serious operation, and being far from home and friends I took with me a basket of flowers and papers. Upon arriving at the hospital I was conducted by the hall porter to a general ward, and as the door was open I stepped inside, but I had not gone two steps before a young woman, in uniform, flew at me, bearing down upon me like a ship in full sail and barring my further entrance, shouting rudely: "It is not visiting day you can't come in, and you must take that print away its not allowed," and she hustled me out on to the landing.

I tried to remain calm and explain that I had permission to see the patient, at which she flushed up angrily, and grunting: "What's the good of having rules, anyway, if you dont leave these papers outside, I shall put them on the fire-back," and turning on her heel she flounced away.

I put down my unfortunate basket and again ventured inside the ward. A nurse sat at a table near, reading a book; her legs well crossed and exposing a liberal supply of her anatomy and a well-ventilated stocking. She did not vouchsafe to speak or direct me to the bed in which the patient I had come to see was lying; seeing this a patient near at hand asked me who I wanted to see, and pointed me out my poor young friend at the far end of the ward. I learned many things later about the management of this ward, of the awakening of the patients at four o'clock in the morning, by the one night nurse who has an impossible amount of work to do, before going off duty, of the hurrying and scurrying to have "all straight" before 'Sister' appears on duty at nine, of the stale bread and butter, cut in the middle of the night, the tepid tea, and the coarse unappetising food. "Sister's temper" was a bye word, and the patient implored me to say nothing until she was safely out of the hospital, as on one occasion a patient had complained to the doctor of hunger, and she got "what for" when he had gone. I never ventured to pay a

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)