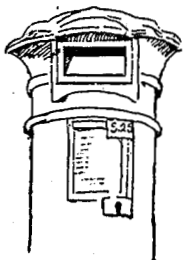


Letters to the Editor.

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.

ON THE RIGHT ROAD.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—My attention has been called to an article under the head of "Examinations" in your issue of December 24th. I think it is only right to say that one-third of the marks given to nurses at the end of their three years' training at Lewisham is given for practical nursing, technical skill, or under whatever other name general personal fitness is calculated for. These marks are allotted on the Ward Reports of the Sisters under whose supervision the nurse has been working, and subsequently to the advice of the Matron. Although you say that the Nursing School at Lewisham is of very recent date I would like to take this opportunity of saying that from my experience of hospitals and nursing at home and abroad (now getting a very long one) I know of no place where nurses are so admirably trained and taught as at Lewisham, and one has only to walk round the wards of the Infirmary to appreciate the results of such good work. The Case Books presented by the nurses this winter were excellent, and I took them away not to show to other nurses, but to let the modern medical student get some idea how to observe, how to watch, and how to record.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
C. J. ARKLE, M.D., F.R.C.P.

[We have referred with satisfaction in the ECHOES to the fact that the Matron of the Lewisham Infirmary acts as Principal of the Nursing School attached to that institution.—ED.]

NURSING IN CAIRO.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I am informed that it is being stated at home that nurses are at the present time needed in Cairo. I hope therefore that you will be good enough to give publicity in your valuable journal to the fact that this is not my experience. I have nursed out here before, and know a good many of the doctors, who are always most kind in giving me work, but at the present time there seems very little to be had. Furthermore nurses are not in particularly high repute in Cairo just now. About 30 came out in the summer hoping to be sent to the front with the troops, who, I understand, have not behaved with the discretion, and circumspection which is desirable at all times, and which is more especially essential in a place like this. I do not, therefore, advise nurses to come out here on the chance of getting

work, indeed I do not think it is ever wise to start off to a foreign country, as a private nurse, unless one has some definite work in view. One may easily get into very grave difficulties. I have travelled about the world a good deal myself, and nursed under all sorts and conditions, but I should be very sorry to start off to Egypt or elsewhere on the indefinite statement that "nurses are wanted." I should want to know, when, where, and by whom.

I am,
Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
A PRACTICAL PERSON.

THE AGE LIMIT.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—The daily papers are poking fun at a nurse who, in applying for a post as Charge Nurse in an infirmary, gave her age as 28, and produced evidence of 15 years hospital experience. When questioned, the nurse said she believed she was born in 1846, but altogether disclaimed being 52 years of age. I am not surprised under the circumstances that the Guardians appointed another candidate, but at the same time the problem underlying the question is one which needs serious consideration. I write feelingly, for I myself have passed the rubicon of five-and-thirty, after which age few co-operations will receive a nurse on to their staff. Much the same applies to hospital appointments, and what is there to look forward to in one's old age except beggary? True, one may subscribe to the Nurses' Pension Fund, and by paying into it about a half of one's entire income in one's working days, may perhaps secure a pension (why a pension if one has paid for it oneself by the way?) of 10s. a week—the greatest amount most of us can hope to afford. But even so, this is a miserable pittance to live upon, indeed one is inclined to wonder if one is not wisest in spending the money in one's working days, on the necessities and pleasures one is obliged to forego in order to keep up the necessary payments. If you, dear Madam, would give some advice in your columns as to how we elderly nurses can obtain work, you would win the gratitude of many hundreds to whom the question of how to obtain a livelihood becomes daily more of an insoluble problem. There are many of us who have good work in us, long past the age of forty, and it is hard that, time after time, we should find ourselves passed over in favour of younger nurses, smarter no doubt, but certainly possessing much less experience than we do. It is small wonder, considering the demand there is for young nurses that many nurses dye their hair, pose as something under thirty, and assume the manners of youth, when they are well on into the fifties. These proceedings are indefensible and foolish, of course; but, after all, bread, if not bread and butter, is a necessity, and women will do a good deal for it.

Yours faithfully,
A MIDDLE AGED NURSE.

[This is a very serious and sad question, and is being constantly brought to our notice. Of course we must not forget that all nurses wish for the best and most remunerative work. Thus we find overcrowding in certain branches and a lack of workers in others.—ED.]

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