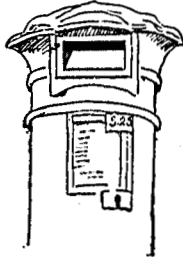


Letters to the Editor.

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.

THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINE IN TRAINING.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read with great pleasure Miss Isla Stewart's most valuable paper on the subject of the value of discipline in training in last week's NURSING RECORD. I do not think it is possible to over-rate its importance, and I am glad to see that it is given by Miss Stewart the first place in the factors which go to make a good nurse. Side by side with this fact, however, I think we must recognise that it is day by day becoming increasingly difficult to maintain discipline in our nursing schools. The spirit of the age is against it for one thing, and further, a Matron frequently has to work single-handed in this matter, and does not by any means always receive support from those from whom she has a right to expect it. There is, I am sure, a growing tendency on the part of medical men to assume control, not only in relation to the treatment of the patients, with regard to which, of course, the head of the nursing staff recognises and supports their supremacy, and enforces strict obedience to their directions, but also as regards the personal discipline of the nurses, thus usurping the Matron's province also. I know more than one capable and conscientious Matron who has resigned her post because she found it impossible to do her duty in this respect. It has been abundantly proved that without discipline neither a high standard of nursing nor of personal conduct in a nursing staff can be maintained. Surely it ought to be possible for a Matron to perform her duty without having to face the alternative of resignation. Can we wonder that the line of least resistance is adopted by some Matrons, and discipline is allowed to slide?

Yours faithfully,
A LOVER OF DISCIPLINE.

SATAN IN PETTICOATS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—If such a disgraceful thing as the nurse dubbed by Mr. Gant "Satan in Petticoats" exists, it seems to me to be due to two causes:

First, the gradually and rightly increasing reluctance on the part of the leading hospitals to accept uneducated women for training. This induces those women who are unable or too idle to obtain a three years' certificate, and who still want to be looked upon as "ladies" to dress themselves up in some kind of uniform and to slip into the ranks of so called "private nurses," where they fancy that their incompetence will be less easily discovered.

Secondly it is due to the credulity of the general public. It too often happens that the relatives of a sick person will accept a nurse recommended by some

chance acquaintance without asking to see her certificate or obtaining her from some Nursing Institution whose position is assured and to which if she prove unsatisfactory complaint may be addressed.

Thus the unscrupulous person succeeds in her aim. One can only advise the public to call in some of the wisdom of the serpent of which the Satan certainly has a superfluous stock.

There seems to me to be a simple way to cast out Satan, and that is to *protect the uniform*. It would be an impossibility for a man not in the army to pose as a soldier for the simple reason that a soldier's dress is a special one, and that by no means could he obtain it. Why, in the great army of nurses should not the uniform be equally marked and equally precious. As long as a woman who ties on a bonnet with white strings and slips into a long cloak is looked upon as a nurse, so long will the unscrupulous succeed in their devices.

Very truly yours,
A FRIEND OF NURSES.

THE DISABILITIES OF WOMEN LODGERS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—As you are always keenly interested in the position of women before the law, may I draw your attention to a condition of the law which seems to me very unjust. Having occupied the same rooms as a lodger for nearly two years, I went to place myself on the Register, in order that I might, in the future, be able to record my vote on matters in which women have the right to do so. I found to my surprise, though I suppose I ought to have known, that, being a woman, and paying rent to a landlord living in the same house, I had no right to any vote. A man under the same conditions is entitled to vote, but women, I was told, "are not considered in any way at all." An anomaly also is that if my landlord lived next door I should have a vote. One is irresistibly reminded of Sam Weller's opinion—"If that's the Law then the Law's a h'ass." At the same time, it is but one more illustration of the fact that man-made laws are framed for the benefit of man as opposed to womankind. The only way in which I can see we can hope to have these unequal laws altered is by adopting the plan which you have advocated in the NURSING RECORD, of working for the return to Parliament of any man, no matter what his politics, who will support women's franchise, and of working *against* any candidate opposed to the suffrage. The work of women at the time of Parliamentary elections, if organized on these lines, would be a factor which would have to be reckoned with. Hoping that at the next general election women's suffrage will be made a test question for Parliamentary candidates,

I am,
Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
A WOMAN LODGER.

[We cordially agree with our correspondent in thinking that women should ascertain the views of Parliamentary candidates on the all important question of woman's suffrage before helping in any way to secure their return. An organized scheme in connection with Women's Political Societies to oppose the return of any candidate who did not support women's suffrage would be a potent factor in convincing the opposite sex that women are in earnest in this matter.—ED.]

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