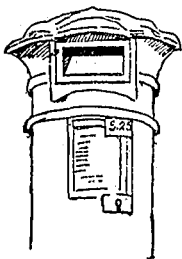


**Letters to the Editor.**

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.*

**ABLUTIONS IN HOSPITALS,**

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR EDITOR,—We are all much shocked at the letter from a "Staff Nurse" in your last week's paper. Surely the *highest* standard is the only one to be aimed at in any nursing point *personally* concerning our patients, and what doctor would consider a ward ready for him with patients unwashed? I think the tendency of the average hospital nurse is to make a little *too* much of the necessity of having the wards ready for the visit of the Matron as well as the Doctor. One little boy said to me a short time ago:—"I am so glad when you go because I need not keep so straight." Needless to say, this was the nurse's regulation, not mine. I think Matron as well as Nurse should think first of the comfort and cleanliness of the patients, and it would be a great thing if the Matrons would look a little more into such matters themselves. We very frequently get nurses here, who have not been trained to wash patients all over in bed, and who I fear are quite contented with a weekly wash. In one hospital a probationer on going to a new ward proceeded to wash a patient and the man said "surely this is new regulations, Nurse." In many cases the method depends on the Staff of the Ward and not on the head of the Nursing School, which is not right. A uniform standard of training should be insisted upon in this as in all other things. In my own case a slight difficulty once arose, but an appeal to our Doctor put it right, and backed by *his* orders the work was properly done. I shall always feel grateful to the excellent Matron under whom I worked as a ward sister for over four years, and whose standard is the *highest* and her inspection given to those points which concern the comfort and cleanliness of all connected with the patients. It would be interesting to have further opinions on this subject, but I hope all nurses are as shocked as mine are at "Staff Nurse."

Yours faithfully,

E. C. SANDFORD,

Matron and Superintendent of Nurses.  
City Hospital, Edinburgh, March 13th, 1900.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—The letters of "A Much-Tried Night Superintendent" and "A Staff Nurse" throw a lurid light upon the want of training and supervision of some hospital nurses. The former clearly indicates that "new pros" in her hospital are not taught the proper way of washing a patient in bed, unless they happen to come under her notice. It appears to me that the day sisters and staff nurses cannot be doing their duty if it falls to the lot of the night superintendent to instruct "new pros" in their duties.

A "Staff Nurse" clearly shows by her letter that she evidently neither practises nor teaches one of the fundamental principles of Hygiene and good nursing—cleanliness. One feels very sorry for the probationers who may be under her, and one cannot help wondering who her Ward Sister is, and if the Matron ever looks into things. I know that in one of the largest London hospitals much time is spent by the nurses, especially, of course, the "pros," in paint and window cleaning, &c., that may account for the ten-minutes per patient method. All this compares most unfavourably with the method in vogue in the hospital where I was trained (more than a decade ago), there all patients incapable of washing themselves, were washed under a blanket to below the waist daily and their beds made by the day nurses. Those patients capable of washing themselves were given basins of warm water by the night nurses, and expected, and were generally glad, to wash to their waist, and it was very seldom necessary to insist. After this washing was over, the night nurses made the beds of these patients and of convalescents. *All backs* were washed and rubbed with spirit and powder *twice* a day (except those getting up, and even these were washed once a day) by the day nurses. All probationers were *taught* how to wash a patient, and woe befall any one who tried to scamp or who unnecessarily exposed a patient. One can now better understand the bitter complaints that are made of some trained (?) nurses. I was under the impression that it was only the old nurses who "picked up" their knowledge, and that nowadays the nurses were trained, *i.e.*, taught. Evidently it is not so. Apologising for the length of my letter.

I am, yours faithfully,

AN OLD NURSE.

40, The Drive, Tonbridge, Kent.  
March 11th, 1900.

**MATRONS' CHRONIC.**

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—The account you give of the treatment of an unfortunate homicidal patient in a nursing home is, indeed, amazing. I hardly think it possible that any trained nurse could be so callous as to act in the way described—I hope not for the honour of the profession. I think at least it should be stated whether the superintendent of the home, where poor Miss Perkins came to her untimely end, is really a trained nurse or not, so that we may know whether the nursing profession has to deplore such behaviour on the part of one of its members, or whether the lady in question is one of those who undertake the responsibility of managing a nursing home, while having no experience to qualify her for such a position. At any rate, the fact that such an occurrence is possible points to the necessity for some form of control of Private Nursing Homes. The scandals connected with these institutions are great, and although there are many in which the work is conscientiously and thoroughly performed, and which are of the utmost value, there are others which are most inefficiently and undesirably conducted, and at present the public have no means of discriminating between the two.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

THREE YEARS CERTIFICATE.

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