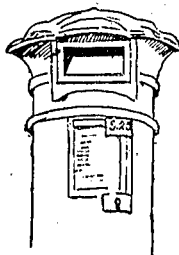


Letters to the Editor.

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.

MALARIA.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read with much interest and profit the "Practical Notes on Nursing in the Tropics," which you published the last two weeks, by Miss E. V. Kanhack, but I cannot but feel sorry that she dismisses the subject of the nursing of malaria in two and a half lines. "Malaria does not give much scope for nursing as the subject generally prefers being left alone and an attack soon exhausts itself."

In my opinion, and I know I am expressing the views of others who have had considerable experience in this branch of nursing, cases of malaria require the most careful nursing that the best and most highly trained nurse can give, and even so it is only after prolonged experience and most careful observation of its many phases that one is able to render the best assistance possible. I think the advice of a medical man as to enteric fever is even more true as to malaria. "Never regard even a mild case lightly, you never know where you are." It is true, happily, that many cases run a very ordinary course and the patient proceeds to recovery after a few days, but even in these cases there is work for the nurse. A golden rule in all cases of malaria is to secure free action of the bowels, and to get the skin to act. The prescription of drugs is of course outside a nurse's province, but careful observation of the patient, and accurate reports to the medical man are of the greatest value. In all cases when the skin is dry there is an element of danger, and I myself have seen at least one case, and known of more, where a patient who had absolutely no symptom to cause anxiety, with the exception of a dry skin, suddenly showed signs of heart failure, and died within a few hours with a temperature of 109°. It is these startling and unexpected changes for which a nurse, in cases of malaria, must always be on the watch. In first cases she should be especially vigilant, for one never knows what form a first fever may take, there appear to me to be almost as many varieties as there are in individuals. Successive fevers, as a rule, follow much on the lines of the first, although, it may be noted, that while first fevers are usually remittent, successive ones tend to become intermittent.

Another nursing point to be noted is that malarial patients should always be clothed in woollen garments, and nursed between blankets. These may be of the lightest, if necessary, but cotton or linen sheets should never be allowed until the patient is well on the road to recovery. Again, sudden attacks of profuse perspiration, soaking the clothing worn by the patient, and even the bed clothes, frequently occur. The wet clothing should at once be removed, the patient be dried with a soft bath towel, and dry clothing be put on, or the result is a chill, very likely to be followed by serious complications.

A most serious form of malaria is that accompanied by persistent insomnia, nervous prostration, and an inordinately large appetite. It most commonly occurs after a prolonged residence in the tropics, and frequently ends fatally. I can only just mention the hæmoglobinuric form, but this, with its sudden onslaught, the gravity of the illness, and the very large percentage of deaths arising from it, taxes the resourcefulness and the ability of the very best nurse, and the skill of doctors of long experience, and after all has been done that seems possible to do the patient frequently slips through their fingers just as the acute symptoms are passing away. I have already exceeded the limits of a letter, but I think a book might well be written on the nursing of malaria.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A NURSE FROM THE TROPICS.

PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read with feelings of envy the programme in the NURSING RECORD last week for the Annual Convention of the National Associated Alumnae in the United States. When will the Nurses' Association in this country present such a programme? Never I fear while the present blight rests upon it. Never until once more we have the Matrons, who did so much for it in its early days, back again in the position which is theirs by all the laws of right and honour. The R.B.N.A. has gone steadily downhill since that fatal day in 1895, when we were deliberately duped. I say it advisedly, for we were there, at the meeting, ready and anxious to vote for those in whom we trusted, and the matter was never, we supposed by their own wish, put to the vote. Not till later did we learn of that discreditable conference between medical men and matrons. It is ancient history now, this great betrayal. We know all the dirty details, but, if we had been told *then*, it would have required all our credulity to believe them. But from that day to this the R.B.N.A. has gone from bad to worse. How could it do otherwise after such treachery? Now the very thought of its arranging a professional programme in which papers are presented by its members, and their professional affairs freely, discussed raises a smile. It would be the last thing desired by the officers, and I fear that most of the nurses who would be competent to present papers of value have resigned their membership in disgust. When will the Nurses' Association be governed by nurses one wonders?

Yours faithfully,

ONE WHO RESIGNED.

MADAME BUTTERFLY.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to see that at last there is some plain speaking on the subject of the Society Women who don our uniform and pose as nurses in the war. They do not appear to like it either, for I have seen some very indignant letters on the subject from the offenders. Well, we trained nurses have long felt indignant that our honourable profession should have been taken up these butterflies of fashion, to be dropped with the rest of their South African kit when they come home again.

Yours faithfully,

IN EARNEST.

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