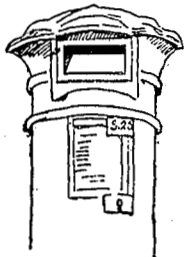


Letters to the Editor.

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 COLONIAL NURSING ASSOCIATION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was glad to see that in your last issue you drew attention to a serious defect in the organization of the Colonial Nursing Association, namely the lack of professional representation in the Committees dealing with the selection of nurses. It does seem such a pity that a society which is so much needed, and is formed for such an excellent purpose, should ignore so essential an element in its success. Those of us who are Matrons, more especially those who have had any experience of foreign service know how necessary it is that the selection of nurses for this branch of work should be most carefully made. To give the Committee of the Colonial Nursing Association their due, I believe they honestly try to do their best, and to select the nurses with circumspection and care, but they have made the usual mistake of thinking that they are competent to select professional workers without help from responsible members of the profession. It seems a most incomprehensible attitude. When there are experienced matrons of our great hospitals who would, no doubt, be willing to give the Committee of this Association their invaluable assistance, why should the said Committee blunder on without it, and make the mistakes into which amateurs inevitably fall. It can surely only be because they do not understand the value of trained nursing, and the advantage of such expert help as would be secured at once were the selection of medical men, or indeed of the members of any other profession, under consideration. One would indeed be surprised that Mr. Chamberlain has not grasped and rectified this omission, but when one reads of his being found in the lobby with the opponents to the admission of women to Borough Councils one wonders at nothing.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,  
MATRON.

TESTIMONIALS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The question of "Testimonials" touched on by "Certificated" is one of some importance to us nurses. Testimonials have of late become very discredited, because presumably in the past they have been written by medical men for nurses, without due knowledge of character—or much consideration, indeed we have all heard the story of the "pretty lady Pro" who asked the admiring House Surgeon for such documentary evidence of her qualities and capacity—and who straightway repeated his answer, with much gusto, "that if she would write what she wanted him

to say—he would copy and sign it."!! But joking apart—now that a hospital certificate is of some solid advantage to the recipient, it does not seem fair that those pupils of the school who are unable to obtain it, should be given flourishing testimonials either by the medical staff or sisters. I know of such cases; it depreciates the value of the certificate of efficiency and misleads the public. The difficulty comes in also where no certificates are given, as at St. Thomas's Hospital, or as at Middlesex Hospital without examination. Nurses must have something to show as a guarantee of training, and at present male hospital committees think more of a testimonial given by a medical man (who only sees one on one's best manners in the ward), than of a certificate in general terms, which does not state if a nurse is "winning in manner," "truly womanly," "a soothing influence in the ward," "a general favourite" with the staff, etc., etc., all matters of the utmost importance, no doubt. Certificates should in my opinion be more comprehensive in expression than they are at present, and in the good bye and bye the Diploma of Nursing might be an authentic statement guaranteeing efficiency after examination. At present so-called certificates mean very little, as they are bestowed for such a varying quality of knowledge—you see we have no standard in nursing as yet.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours truly,  
THREE YEARS' CERTIFICATE.

THE SOCIETY GHOUL.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Your excellent paper was brought to my notice some time ago by my private nurse, and since my severe illness, in which I consider my recovery was mainly due to her conscientious and untiring devotion, I have continued to take the NURSING RECORD to acquaint myself with what you so aptly term "Nursing Politics," and indeed it is quite impossible to understand the nursing question without professional aid. This all apropos of society women at the war, I do so strongly approve of what "A Soldier's Widow" wrote to you on this subject. The "thousands of loving and anxious wives and mothers" must not submit to the just expressions levelled at the smart society woman by Mr. Treves, and various correspondents at the front. These suffering women both at the Cape and at home deprecate the vulgar ostentation of the society woman and her nursing pose, quite as indignantly as Mr. Treves and professional nurses can do, and we want to know how all these "butterfly" women have gained access to the wards of military hospitals, and why our wounded men folk are subjected to their tender mercies. It is nonsense Mr. Treves suggesting that the Army Medical Officers have not the power to deal with this evil—they are responsible for the welfare of the sick and appear to have absolute power over the Nursing Department, why then have they permitted untrained women to appear in the wards dressed up in nursing uniform, and to assume responsible duties for which they are not trained! We are informed at home that only thoroughly trained nurses have been appointed by the War Office for active service, surely the War Office has the power to at once issue directions that amateurs are not to wear the nurses' uniform or to take part in the nursing of the

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