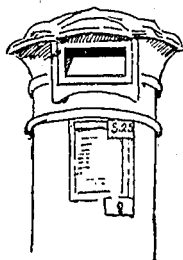


Letters to the Editor.**NOTES, QUERIES. &c.**

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 NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CERTIFICATED NURSES.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to support the plea of Miss Mary Burr, that in the formation of the National League of Certificated Nurses "all certificated nurses might join, so that the more progressive members might instruct and educate the conservative members to a higher standard, and all work for a minimum standard of three years' training and State Registration," and to say how pleased I was to read your foot note pointing out how this can be accomplished in an orderly manner, by the formation of Training School Leagues like Barts. But how is this to be done? Things at a distance from London are very far behind the times in professional matters for nurses, and the Matrons of the Training Schools do not seem inclined to make a move to help the nurses who have left the hospital, and once we have left we seem to drift and drift further and further away from all participation in the Nursing School in which we have been trained, and soon that place "knows us no more," I had a good cry after the last visit paid to the dear old hospital in which I was trained, and worked hard for four years. There was a new Matron, one who did not know me even by name, the two sisters I knew best were out, most of my contemporaries had left, and in fact I came away feeling a rank outsider, determined never to go near the place again, although I still hold it in the most affectionate remembrance. How different it would have been had I been a member of an M. R. I. League! It is not good for nurses to drift when in private nursing, and be entirely thrown back upon themselves—it makes one selfish and inhuman. What is to be done?

Yours, CERT. M. R. I.

WEEDING OUT.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR EDITOR,—It does seem so strange that nursing educational reforms are adopted so slowly by hospital authorities in this country. For twenty years now a system of periodical reports of the work and character of probationers have formed part of the system of training in many large hospitals, and surely it is time that such an arrangement which is just both to managers and nurses should be adopted in Poor Law Infirmaries. In this hospital I instituted, with the consent of the Committee, the plan under which I myself was trained fifteen years ago. An authorised list of questions is printed, and each quarter sent to the Sister of each ward, to which she is requested to reply. These lists having been returned to me

(Matron) are carefully studied. I then add my remarks on the conduct and capacity of each probationer, and copy these reports into a book arranged for the purpose. The lists are then tabulated and sent in to the committee, which gives much time to the study of them. By this plan the fitness of probationers is easily estimated, and if a probationer receives two indifferent reports from the Sisters—and proves from observation in the Home that she is not up to a certain desirable standard—the committee take action, and she is relieved from further service. To make things quite fair each Probationer who enters the school has a copy of the regulation questions given to her, so that she may be fully aware of its scope—and I invariably interview her after an indifferent report and place her shortcomings before her, urging her to overcome faults of unpunctuality, or untidiness, or forgetfulness, etc., in the forthcoming term. Some Probationers are found on trial to be hopelessly unsuited for nursing duties, these are reported at once and after due enquiry their services dispensed with, but these examples are rare, if the Matron is really very careful and conscientious in selecting candidates—and also if a few months' trial is given before a candidate may enter the Nursing School as a Probationer. Of course I know that Matrons in Poor Law Infirmaries have no recognised status or authority as Superintendents of Nursing, that their position is immensely difficult, that in nine cases out of ten a specious nurse can influence the medical officer to pit her interests against those of the Matron, that the large proportion of Guardians are in a complete fog when dealing with the difficult professional interests of medicine and nursing, and that they are naturally inclined to "back up" insubordination in "a nice girl" in opposition to the more mature Matron—who is usually accredited with some malign desire to "persecute" the nursing staff, yet if such a system of official reports had been in use at the Croydon Infirmary, much of the present dispute might have been avoided. Could not the Matrons' Council, or a Committee of Poor Law Matrons, draw up some uniform curriculum of training and reports for the adoption of the Local Government Board, as they have no Head Nursing officer in the Department? No doubt such an easy method of maintaining discipline has never occurred to them.

"A LOVER OF LAW AND ORDER."

Notice to our Readers.**OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.**

As next week's issue will contain the last Coupon to be sent in with those which have already appeared in our issues of December 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd, by those of our readers who are going to compete for the Guinea Prize, we would remind them that the five Coupons and Answers should be posted to the Editor, with full name and address as early on the 29th inst. as possible, and that the competitors must not omit to inscribe the envelope with the words "Puzzle Prize." The envelopes so marked will be opened by the Editor, on Tuesday, 1st January, and the one first opened which contains the correct answers will be awarded the Prize. The name of the winner will appear in our issue of January 5th, 1901.

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