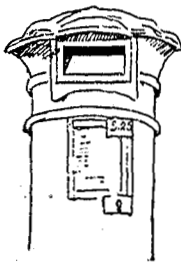


## Letters to the Editor.

NOTES, QUERIES, &amp;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.*

## WEEDING OUT.

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

MADAM,—In reply to one of Miss Sandford's interesting questions appearing in your issue of the 15th inst. "How far is a Matron justified in retaining on the staff a nurse for three years, and then refusing her a certificate?" I think most people will agree, that nothing can justify her in such a course, and were there not ample proof to the contrary in the shoals of inefficient nurses to be found all over the country—one would naturally imagine a Matron incapable of retaining unpromising material in the nursing school. Now, I am not condemning our Matrons off hand, rather would I ask your readers to dive down to first causes and try to grasp the reasons why nurses generally are inferior to their immediate predecessors. Few matrons, I think, will dispute the fact that, taken as a whole, the women who are now turned out from hospitals and infirmaries as trained are not up to the standard either morally or physically of the nurses of a past decade, and that although the present-day probationer enjoys numerous educational advantages denied to the steady, capable, unselfish nurse of the eighties, she is not to be compared with her for all-round usefulness. Of course, there are always exceptions which prove the rule.

Now I have thought and questioned much on this knotty point, and have come to the conclusion that the reason of failure in nurse training is the *lack of discipline* in the management of our Training Schools. In the old days, when inaugurating a Nurse Training School, the Matron was imported for the express purpose of maintaining discipline, *and she did it*. Now her work, and the maintenance of authority, is rendered most difficult. Half a dozen influences are at work. These take the form of a Nursing Committee composed entirely of persons who have not worked one day either in a hospital or a College, or of a medical officer, generally her junior, seldom a man of parts or of the world, or of a Committee of kind old gentlemen, whose motto openly expressed is "there's more flies caught with 'oney nor vinegar," who desire the Matron to be "a mother to the nurses," but "you mus'n't smack 'em you know." Well! it is just this policy of sparing the rod which spoils the child—there is a deal of "cussedness" in human nature, and it requires a wholesome modicum of discipline to teach it self-control. Our so-called nursing schools are now schools only in name—and who is to blame the unfortunate Matron, for refusing the attempt to train women and develop in them all the higher virtues, without a shred of authority? Especially do my remarks refer to the nursing departments of Poor Law Infirmaries.

A MARTINET.

## THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CERTIFICATED NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Many private nurses, I feel sure, sympathise with "Cert. M. R. I.," in that "good cry," after visiting her Alma Mater and finding that the present administration "knew not Joseph." How many of us upon visiting the hospital in which we received our training, and perhaps worked in for years, have not come away wiser and sadder women. I know the feeling—we have served our time—in this hurrying age others have stepped in to do the work done formerly by ourselves—the dear old hospital has no further use for us, and we go out of the gate feeling very down at the heel. It seems to me that the work accomplished by Miss Stewart at St. Bartholomew's in uniting all the certificated pupils of the school, and, as it were, bringing all the stray and lonely "Bart's" lambs again into the fold, is one of the most beneficent and splendid works which has been accomplished for nurses in this country. I have been a lost sheep these many years, and am very happy to find myself again within the charmed circle of *home*, because that is how I feel when now I revisit the shades of Rahere.

"A MEMBER OF THE BART'S LEAGUE."

## THE SPIRIT OF NURSING.

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

DEAR EDITOR,—Might I have space to say a few words in this last issue of the century. I do it in no censorious spirit—but as a body are we nurses as admirable as we might be—are we not falling away somewhat from some of the old ideals—are we fostering the fine spirit of nursing which gives much and takes little? Do let us try in the coming century to cling to all that is best in our splendid sphere of work, and guard against placing too high a value on the things of this world—mere material things, which, after all, are so unsatisfying. Are not we a bit keen about money. I have had much to do with the modern private nurse—I would she were less grasping—don't let us fall down and worship the golden calf. No offence intended.

Yours cordially,

"ONE OF THE PAST GENERATION."

## Notice to our Readers.

## OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

As this week's issue contains 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.

A new Picture Puzzle will appear next week, and a guinea prize will be given on the same terms.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)