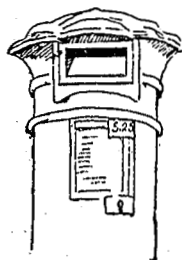


Letters to the Editor.

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.

BELOW THE SALT.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Your article and the letter of "Co-operation" in last week's NURSING RECORD is of great interest to me, as I have had some years' experience as a private nurse, both in England and abroad. I think if all nurses had a voice in the management of their own affairs an absolute rule would be made, that they should not be required to take their meals with the servants, either in private houses or in hotels. I have never been asked to do so in either, but it has been my misfortune to be employed in nursing the same patient, with a nurse who had consented, at the suggestion of the secretary of the institution to which she belonged, to oblige the client by taking the same position in the house as the "upper servants," with the result that I was looked upon as being entirely responsible for the case (I having been selected by the Doctor in attendance), while she was considered a sort of "maid attendant." The position was equally objectionable to us both, as it was impossible for us to work on equal terms, although we had both trained at leading London Hospitals.

When nursing in hotels I find the best plan is always to change my dress before going to table d'hôte, for a uniform always attracts attention, whether the manager of the hotel objects to it or not. And it adds considerably to my pleasure to be able to discuss other subjects during meals, instead of "shop," which is inevitably the case if staying at a health resort, and you are known to be a nurse.

Too many nurses are quite satisfied to be "taken in and done for" by the institutions to which they belong, never thinking that it is their lack of *esprit de corps* that is the chief impediment to nursing progress. To my thinking it is the indifferent ones who stand in the way of our leading Matrons, who are so bravely trying to raise the standard of nursing, so as ultimately, when our forces are better organized, to obtain State Registration. Then we shall be able to hold a recognised position with other professional women, and be treated as such. If we never try to help ourselves how can we expect others to take an interest in our affairs?

Yours faithfully,

A BELIEVER IN CO-OPERATION.

March 3rd, 1901.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—It is a relief to turn from the unprofessional tone adopted by what you aptly call the "pseudo nursing press" and read your strong and sympathetic words on nursing matters. Many private nurses must feel grateful to you for last week's article

"Below the Salt." As the RECORD is widely read in the women's clubs it is to be hoped it will do some good, as the public generally are very loath to treat trained nurses as professional women, and I have suffered many humiliations in "good houses." In one the parlour maid objected to waiting on me at table, and would never hand me any vegetables. This, of course, sounds pettifogging, but it is the pin-pricks which annoy. Again, because I refused the invitation of a most gallant footman to finish the champagne "heel taps" with him on the stairs after the family dinner I was subjected to many covert insults. This same young man wrote me ardent effusions in which he informed me that my "particular buxom type of beauty appealed to his innermost feelings," and what between annoyance and a sense of humour, I had a bad time in that house. But, joking apart, I fear there is no hope of any improvement in the status of the trained nurse in private houses, as so many people prefer the "servant type," and Middlesex Hospital and other institutions still train and send out women with little general education—they have no educational standard for admission—and as this most reactionary of institutions has the entire power over the R.B.N.A. and our Charter, they have lowered the standard of nursing in London in an extraordinary degree during the last five years. The "great betrayal" of the nursing profession by Mr. Fardon and his Middlesex supporters has done us irreparable harm in private work, as they give preference to the uneducated woman, thus making it doubly hard for the educated and highly-trained nurse to keep up the standard. One has only to notice the "nurse tramps" one meets about the town day after day—a down-at-heel and untidy crew, who are, by their slovenly and often dirty appearance signing the death warrant of outdoor uniform, and general respect for our cloth. Somehow one always feels cheered proportionately after reading one's weekly *Record*.

Yours gratefully,

TIRED OF PRIVATE NURSING.

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I have been a most interested reader of the letters which appeared in the *Daily Mail* on nursing matters, and read with much pleasure the article on the "Nurse Fraud," which advocated State Registration for Nurses, though I could not help chuckling to see your name associated with that of Sir Henry Burdett as supporting this measure, when anybody who knows anything about nursing politics is fully aware that he is the inspirer of the anti-registration party, and therefore, as a necessary sequence, the *Fides Achates* of the Nurse Fraud. I was surprised at the sudden drop of the curtain on the subject after this article appeared, for I thought surely some nurses, who realize the importance of this measure, both to themselves and the public, must have written to the Editor of the *Daily Mail*, but, as I wrote and my letter was not published, no doubt others have done the same. This boycott of the question in the public press emphasises the value to us of our own professional journal, and of your fearless advocacy of this measure in the NURSING RECORD.

Yours faithfully,

STATE REGISTRATIONIST.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)