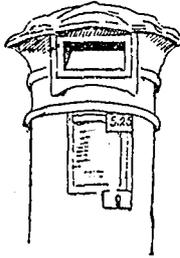


## Letters to the Editor.

## 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.*

## THE VAGARIES OF PRIVATE NURSES.

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

MADAM,—I am greatly in sympathy with your views on the necessity for some protection for good nurses and patients from "bogus nurses," and beg to ask you if such abuses as the following cannot be put an end to.

Two dear friends of my own have lately been ill, both army officers, the first, a very old man, had a nurse sent in from a local institution upon the recommendation of the practitioner in attendance. As he became dangerously ill, the family sent for a specialist from London, who was horrified in examining the patient to find his back flayed the size of a soup plate. Upon pointing this out to the local doctor he was informed that he knew of the condition, although the family did not, that the nurse had not reported to him that she had burnt the patient's back with a hot water bottle, "but as she was a local nurse I did not want to make unpleasantness, and so did not discharge her from the case."

The specialist, upon enquiring the cause of this trouble, was told jauntily by the nurse that "she supposed the bottle had been too hot and the patient was restless and burnt himself." A tin had been put in the bed without a flannel cover, the poor old man had become suddenly worse on the night this occurred, and in a few days died. Such a shock was surely sufficient to kill him, and after a straightforward report from the specialist the family at once requested the nurse to leave. No doubt she is still undertaking the care of the sick. The second case was in London. A nurse from a well known institution was sent in by the doctor. She was engaged to be married, and when not off duty with her young man, spent most of her time in the sick room making her trousseau, and as these garments—*pairs of drawers*—were belaced and beribboned, she held them up for her patient, a young officer, to admire. Surely a most indelicate proceeding. Anyway, he was disgusted, as well he might be. Moreover, keeping a lamp flaring in the sick room and snipping and stitching half the night was a great annoyance to him. Now is this the modern scientific nursing we hear so much about—as taught in our leading training schools? Surely not—then where do these coarse and incompetent women come from, and how are we to protect our sick people from them? This is a matter of immense importance to the public. So long as I have a leg to stand on I will not have a trained nurse in my house when my people are ill, unless you can send me one.

Yours very truly,

"A CONSTANT READER."

[The way to improve the tone of private nursing is to put down nurse sweating, this can only be done by law

State Registration, which would compel the institutions which train nurses to work up to a certain standard, and call into working order a Nursing Council of Control, should make it *fraudulent* for persons to sweat unregistered nurses for gain, or for unregistered nurses to pose as trained. Now, the most incapable, the most ignorant, and most immoral women, are at liberty to call themselves trained nurses, and act as such. Halt the fees paid by the public at present are sopped up by "nurse frauds" and their employers, whilst many estimable and highly skilled trained nurses are out of work. The medical profession, together with the criminal ignorance of the public, are to blame for this condition of affairs. If the medical profession chose to advocate protection for the sick, and efficiently trained nurses, a Bill could be carried through Parliament with ease. So far the large majority of the medical profession attached to the leading training schools have opposed this system of State Registration for Nurses, which they have obtained for their own profession and by which alone they are enabled to maintain a high standard of education and discipline amongst its members. The betrayal of the public, as well as the gross injustice to trained nurses by Mr. Fardon and his supporters on the Royal British Nurses' Association utilising our Association to oppose State Registration—the very key note of the principle for which we nurses founded it—has yet to be grasped in all its baseness by the general public, and trained nurses themselves. We quite intend to place this matter before them in its true light at no distant date.—Ed.]

## A WELL-MERITED COURTESY.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In connection with the accident at West Ham I should like to say the nurses who went to rescue the children, and who the Guardians refused to thank (saying they had only done their duty), were infirm nurses and in no way connected with the dormitory in which the injured children were sleeping. Before being able to reach the children they had to scale walls and wade through water knee deep.

Some of the nurses would be glad if you could inform them if climbing is one of a nurse's qualifications.

Yours respectfully,

A NURSE.

[We have much pleasure in publishing this letter. We have already expressed the opinion that the nurses concerned well deserved the vote of thanks begrudged them by the Rev W. Douglas. It now appears that the dormitory children were not in any way in the charge of the nurses who rescued them. We should like to ask Mr. Douglas, if he had gone to the rescue himself, if he would have thought a vote of thanks ill-timed and inappropriate.—Ed.]

## "WASH LADIES."

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

MADAM.—It was one of my duties as a probationer in a children's ward on night duty to wash napkins—otherwise we should never have been able to keep the babies sweet and clean, but I do not think the nurses ought to wash for "show" they have not time to do it.

Yours truly,

SISTER CHILDREN'S WARD.

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