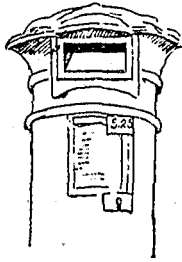


Letters to the Editor.

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.

PRIVATE NURSING IN INDIA.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to object to a statement made by your correspondent B. H., in a December number of the NURSING RECORD—"There are no rules sent with the Nurses to their patients." The facts are these—Some years ago a printed set of rules was sent to each patient, but on finding the patients or their friends habitually enforced the rules in an objectionable manner, I changed my system and now give each Nurse a set of rules to *show* the patients *at her own discretion*. To explain my meaning—I have had such complaints as the following from patients. "Your rule is, 'Nurses must wear uniform always when on duty,' my nurse appeared at my bedside at 2 a.m. in her dressing-gown," and other complaints equally vexatious and frivolous. It may interest you to know our private Nursing Institute funds are distinct from the hospital funds. English Nurses engaged at home for five years through the Up-Country Nursing Association have their passages paid both ways, receive Rs.75 per mensem (£60 per annum), are given uniform and also free board and lodging, have one month's holiday each year, and also a day for every week of duty which is counted as casual leave. There is *nothing* deducted for management from the funds, all of which are used for the benefit of the nurses, and have to be *carefully* administered. I am pleased to be able to give this explanation, as in the case of the "wails," lately published about my work for Government I am prohibited from defending myself by the rules of the Service.

I am, MADAM,

Yours faithfully,

M. A. NISBET, Hon. Sec,

Lady Wenlock Nursing Institute,

General Hospital, Madras,

January 10th, 1901.

THE SERUM TREATMENT.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—The ghastly details related by you with regard to diphtheria serum, make one shudder. Diphtheria is a terrible disease, we all know, but, writing as one who has suffered from it, I emphatically say I would rather have it again than undergo the filth of the serum treatment. To have the serum of horses' blood injected into one's own is unsavoury enough, but when to this may be added the scourgings of their dirty coats, and the germ of tetanus contained in their manure, well, I think, most people will agree that the remedy is worse than the disease. At any rate, I should prefer the latter. One does, at least,

know what is the matter, but if serum is injected how can one tell what filth may be circulating in one's veins. The process appears to me disgusting.

Your's faithfully,

ANTI-SERUM.

THE LETTERS OF A LOVE-SICK LADY.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Much correspondence has taken place on the subject of the "love letters," and many have been the regrets that the life of such a genius as the writer should have been sacrificed to a "mere man." Now it appears that this same man is laughing up his sleeve, and that he wrote the letters himself! Well, after all, I am glad they must be laid at his door, for spite of their genius, it was distasteful to one that any woman in these days could take the view of matrimony therein contained. One felt not only that it was a foregone conclusion that the marriage so looked forward to by the "Englishwoman" must be a failure, for no young man could possibly live up to the standard she required of him (*how* sick he would get of it!), but also that her point of view was wrong and unhealthy, not to say selfish. It is the old question. Should a married woman consider matrimony the Alpha and Omega of her life? Common sense says "No." We women are terribly prone to put all our eggs into one basket. The bottom falls out and then comes the deluge; and when all the eggs are in the matrimonial basket, and the crash comes, it is a tremendous one indeed. But why not take a common-sense view of matrimony, and learn a lesson from the male sex? When a man marries he does not thereafter give up all else and devote himself to billing and cooing. Why should this attitude be expected of a woman? It is only the old harem idea. I, of course, concede that it is the duty of a woman to "look well to the ways of her household," and if she cannot afford servants her time is occupied with her domestic duties, but then she is a hard-working self-respecting member of society who is not wholly absorbed in matrimony. But why that large section of the community who keep servants to do their household work should expect, or desire, to live in idleness all day long, absorbed in their feelings, passes my comprehension. It is healthier and better in every way that a married woman should have some definite occupation which, in the not exceptional case of matrimony turning out more or less of a failure, will provide her with a definite income, and enable her to maintain a self-respecting attitude, and further, in the event of the husband dying without making adequate provision for her, will enable her to earn an honest living, instead of being an incubus on relations, or joining the great army of incompetents, who drag down the market value of women's work so terribly. No! matrimony at its best is an added joy to life, both men and women have distinctive qualities to bring to the union, and "each fulfils defect in each," but do let us abolish the "harem" idea. With it we shall abolish many unhappy marriages.

Yours faithfully,

COMMON SENSE.

[We thank our correspondents for their letters on this subject, but think that now it is time that these should cease, more especially as the Englishmen's Letters have now appeared, and after our reviewer has given her opinion upon these our readers may have something to say with regard to them.—ED.]

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