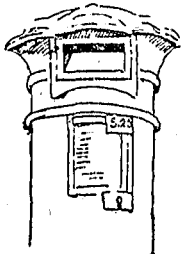


Letters to the Editor.

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

"ONE ROAD TO HAPPINESS."

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was much interested in your recent notice of the efforts now being put forth to further the education of women in domestic matters—viz., at the Chelsea Polytechnic.

We are no longer, thanks to the few more enlightened women of our land, living in the days when ignorance of housekeeping and practical experience of the work of a home is considered to denote a higher grade of humanity, or, in other words, a "gentleman's daughter," a type of gentility so far removed from the working classes as to have nothing in common with them. Nowadays philosophy makes the world at large study truth in its entirety, and we have grown wise enough to know that honest labour is greater than "genteel uselessness," and that to work is more truly conducive to happiness than idle pleasure. In fact, the tide of public opinion now runs in the reverse direction to its current of our grandmothers' day; so that women are, at present, more apt to neglect the more material education of former things, and chiefly to aspire to the higher education of intellect; but who does not know the disorder, waste and unhappiness found in the middle-class homes through the consequent lack of woman's knowledge of domestic matters. Such knowledge must indeed be essential to the comfort and happiness of the homes, and therefore it should be the mother's duty to her girls to give them this education.

Of course, the time may come when the tables will be turned and man will be the domestic creature and woman the money-earner, then, naturally, it would mean the passing over of domestic education to man. But while woman agrees and desires to arrange and manage her home she must prove herself capable of so doing, and be educated accordingly.

On the other hand, it is quite possible, as some do, to elevate domestic work almost to a fetish. This perhaps has been the cause of the reaction against it to-day, and of the evident dislike to its wearisome nature on the part of many women.

But extremes are often dangerous, and we can generally exercise such moderation as to gain the good and avoid the evil.

Yours in truth,

SPEEDWELL.

[As Nursing is essentially a domestic science, we note with pleasure every effort made to educate women systematically on domestic lines.—ED.]

SECT OR FAITH.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I shall be obliged if you will give your

opinion on the following question: "Is it necessary or advisable for a Board of Guardians to ask candidates as probationers and nurses to what religious faith they belong?"

Yours truly,

A WOMAN GUARDIAN.

[We imagine in writing religious *faith*, you referred to religious *sects*. Presumably all nurse applicants belong to the Christian faith—if they are not Agnostics. We are inclined to think that sectarian questions are not advisable between Guardians and their nurses, but it is a question for individual Guardians to decide for themselves. Surely the time is passed when it is of paramount importance to the patients, whether a woman is a Roman or Anglican Catholic, or what is known as a Dissenter. What the sick need in a nurse is a well-trained woman of irreproachable personal character and sympathetic temperament, and are not such women to be found in "all the Churches?" We have met them.—ED.]

PRIVATE NURSES IN THE WARDS.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—There is one important point connected with private nurses' institutions attached to hospitals, which I have not observed referred to in your most helpful journal, and that is the position of certificated nurses who work in the wards between cases. You approve, I know, of private nurses availing themselves of opportunities to keep up with the times—and this can only be done by seeing new systems of treatment in the wards; but I belong to an institution attached to a hospital—and we do find some cause for dissatisfaction that when between our cases we are drafted into the wards to help generally or as "specials"; we are often under the direction of uncertificated ward nurses. We don't like it. Yet how is such a position to be avoided? We "privates" are birds of passage—here to-day and gone to-morrow—or indeed sometimes our service in the hospital can be counted by hours—and it would be unreasonable to expect to take ward charge for a few days as it would disrupt all the routine. Yet to be ordered about by "pros" is not nice, and is not conducive to discipline. Several of us would like your views on the question.

Yours truly,

PILLAR TO POST.

[We are of opinion that it is greatly to the advantage of a private nurse to have facilities for post graduate practical work. Nurses do get rusty after a lengthy term of private service. But we do not approve of the "in and out" system. First because it disorganises the routine of ward work and discipline, and systematic clinical teaching, and secondly because without very great care the private nursing staff is over-worked. We will imagine that all nurses on the private staff are certificated nurses after three years' training and experience. Such nurses are well up to date in their work, and we do not think they are likely to learn anything of much value by a few hours, or even days, in the wards under the direction of staff probationers, and they are apt to get rushed and tired between cases, and unfitted for "hard" cases outside. We must always remember that the public likes its pound of nursing flesh, and more often than not a private nurse does night and part-day duty; the shorter and more

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