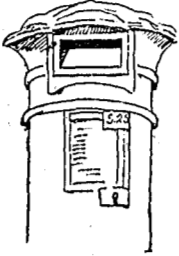


Letters to the Editor

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.

THE ORGANIZATION OF DISTRICT MIDWIFERY.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM.—Amongst the arguments urged in favour of the education and registration of three months' specialists as midwives, are (1) that it is not possible to provide for the poor, certificated nurses, with a midwifery qualification, at prices which they can afford to pay, therefore they must be content with the services of the imperfectly trained. Experience of district midwifery has taught me to believe that this necessity is non-existent. Again, it is said (2) that nurses of a good class do not care to collect their own fees. May I point out that if such midwifery work is properly organized there is no reason why they should do so.

District midwifery should, in my opinion, be organised in connection with a central home, having, at any rate, in the populous districts of the metropolis, a radius of not more than a mile as its field of work. Now, to place the thoroughly qualified nurse-midwife on a par with the private nurse she should earn at least three and a-half guineas a week, as the latter earns her board and lodging in addition to the regulation two guineas. The average cost of this item cannot, in London, be put down at much less than 30s. a week if nurses, as they certainly should be, are made thoroughly comfortable. Can this sum be earned by nurses working as district midwives? I say yes. Or even if this view is considered too optimistic there are many well trained nurse who would be well content with a regular and certain salary of £60 per annum. To consider the higher rate of payment. On the basis that each patient pays 7s. 6d. for attendance at the time of her confinement, and a daily visit for ten days afterwards, each midwife who attends ten cases a week—not an excessive average—will earn £3 15s. od. It must further be remembered that the ordinary fees paid by midwifery pupils, all of whom should be trained nurses, are £26 5s. od. for the three months' education. This, after defraying the cost of their board and maintenance, leaves a margin which can be devoted to lecturers' fees, educational expenses, and the salary of the Superintendent.

With regard to the second objection that nurses of a good class object to collecting their own fees from artizan patients there is no reason why they should do so.

It should be part of the duty of the Superintendent of such an institution as is described, to be at home twice a week at stated hours, say from ten to twelve on Mondays and Thursday, Monday being the day when money is most plentiful with the working classes, to receive small payments in advance. During the nine months in which a woman has to prepare for the coming event she can easily pay in the required sum.

With a little management and forethought, it is possible to provide the poor with midwives recruited from the ranks of trained and disciplined nurses, and we ought not to be content with a lower standard.

L. O. S.

THE SOCIETY FOR COMPULSORY REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—In the able article headed "Legal Status for Nurses," in your issue for February 8th, I was greatly cheered to see, and most heartily endorse, your recommendation that the above Society should be an educational one, and I trust the Registration Sub-Committee will speedily put forth definite ideas on the subject.

I should greatly like to see a leaflet drawn up by the committee, stating in plain language the benefits which would accrue to the general public, the medical profession, and the trained nurse from State Registration, with a space reserved at the end for the signature and address. I should like these leaflets placed in the hands of every trained nurse in the United Kingdom, with a request that those in favour would sign them, and return to a local agent to be appointed by the Sub-Committee, the leaflets to be returned to headquarters by a given date. In the meantime the sub-committee could attack the more difficult task of drawing up a Bill to present to Parliament, and embody with it these signatures as a monster petition. Trusting we shall shortly hear of vigorous measures being pursued.

I remain, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

Bristol.

F. M. L. GROVES.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF WOMEN.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have worked on the Committees of several Societies, but just because I am a woman I have always been excluded from the Finance Committees. Why? And I believe I am quite right in saying that the Funds subscribed by the Women of England in memory of our late Queen are entirely managed by men. Male Presidents, Treasurers, and Hon. Secretaries, calmly monopolise the entire financial authority, and in consequence all the power and *hudos*. Again, I was glad to observe that you recommended the Matron representatives of Policy Holders on the Royal National Pension Fund to satisfy themselves of its thrifty management by *personal investigation*. It would be interesting to know if any of these ladies are permitted to take part in the financial management of the Fund, or if they merely attend Council Meetings and listen to stereotyped reports. Again, why are all the best paid posts, clerical and otherwise, of such women's Societies always given to men? The nurses' money is used to run such Societies—and it would seem only fair that in all women's Societies, the clerical work should be done by women. There are numbers of women trained in business and secretarial work in these days, quite capable of performing the duties. Perhaps the Matrons on the Pension Fund will support this reform, it would be found much less expensive, as women do much more work in a given time than men, and there must be no cheapening of labour.

Yours Truly,

A LATE MEMBER OF THE R. N. P. F.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)