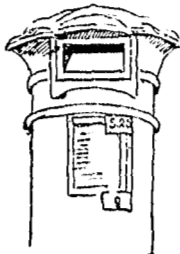


**Letters to the Editor.**

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 CASE FOR HOSPITAL NURSES.**

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

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with much pleasure the able defence of Hospital Nurses in this month's *Nineteenth Century* by Miss Isla Stewart. It is a matter for congratulation that there are those in our own profession who can discuss the case for nurses—and Miss Johnston notwithstanding, there is a case and a very strong case to be made out for nurses—so clearly and sensibly. For if one thing has struck me more than another in Miss Stewart's able article it is its strong common sense, and it is refreshing that she insists that nurses are neither angels nor demons but just average women with the average woman's propensities and failings, but average women placed in surroundings from which they emerge, for the most part, strengthened and improved. I rejoiced also that so high an authority as Miss Stewart points out the need for State Registration of Trained Nurses, for until we get this measure and the consequent discipline which would be exercised in an organised profession, we shall still be open to attacks such as that which Miss Johnston has made upon us. One point I may mention, which has not received much emphasis so far, though it appears to me an important one, is that the nurses Miss Johnston has met, and criticizes so severely, can scarcely have been trained at any of the large and well-organized training schools. It is not sufficiently recognized by the public that while only a small proportion of general hospitals are recognized medical schools, any small, or special hospital, any nursing home with an untrained superintendent, may describe itself as a training school and scatter certificates broadcast, and it is the woman "trained" in institutions of this kind, who, lacking in discipline and professional knowledge, most frequently brings discredit upon our profession. What we need is some definite pronouncement as to what constitutes a nurse training school. Then we shall not have the anomalous spectacle of "nurses" who have obtained certificates after three months' training in an insignificant institution working side by side on terms of equality, and commanding the same fees, as those who have received a thorough nursing education in a well organized school. To the public, a certificate of whatever standing is much the same, but nurses discriminate, and resent, being classed in the same category with the ignorant and practically untrained. Those who are opposing State Registration for Nurses are in my view doing us the greatest possible injustice. Happily, though they may obstruct, they cannot prevent the ultimate attainment of this just measure. Those who have eyes to see need only observe the signs of the times.

Yours obediently,

NEMO.

**THE HOME LIFE OF PRIVATE NURSES.**

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

DEAR MADAM,—Various reasons have been pointed out by correspondents in the columns of the *NURSING RECORD* for the distaste of nurses for private nursing. May I mention one which I have not seen noted, that is, the lack of any home life between cases. Of course nurses who work in connection with institutions are provided with a home "of sorts." This means that they share a common sitting room with their colleagues which is pervaded by the atmosphere of the sick room, and in my experience forms often a clearing house for the details of the cases nursed by the staff, surely a most undesirable condition of affairs. Then, necessarily in an institution of this kind, regular hours as to meals have to be kept, and one must always obtain leave of absence even before going out of the house even for the shortest time. I frankly own this is not my idea of a home, or of a wholesome life for grown and responsible women. I want to know that there is a corner somewhere which I can call my own, where I can have my own things about me, and where, when I am in, I can do as I like, invite whom I like, and manage as I like. It is not much for a working woman to ask, but it seems very difficult of attainment. There really is no reason why we should be treated as school girls, and live a life which is not conducive to the cultivation of all those attributes which one appreciates most in woman. My own experience leads me to believe that the money which is spent in a modest ménage of one's own, preferably a flat, shared with a friend, is money well spent, and I doubt if it costs more in the end than staying about in homes between cases. Think what it means to a woman who for the greater part of the year "lives in her boxes," to know that there is one spot where she is free to live as seems good to her, and which she can stamp with her own personality. I know no more humanizing influence, and I should advise all private nurses who desire to keep intact their "nice" ways to experiment in it. For the ways of the average landlady are not nice. I speak from experience, and not a bad one either as landladies go, and there are few who seem to me to have a rudimentary idea of cleanliness. How can any lodgings possibly be restful which are not clean? And what of the refinements of life? Good service is a most expensive luxury. It is one which is only attainable by the well to do. The alternative is to attend to details oneself. This many a nurse would be glad to do, and would, I believe, be happier for doing. My advice to all concerned is "try it," and private nursing will be shorn henceforth of a most trying feature.

Yours faithfully,

A HOME-LOVING WOMAN.

**THE WORKING DAY OF A PRIVATE NURSE.**

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

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with interest both your editorial remarks and the correspondence in the *NURSING RECORD* on the hours on duty of private nurses. Personally, I do not think any hard and fast rule can be laid down about times off. The nurse must use her own discretion to a great extent as to the arrangement of these and settle them—after consultation with the head of the house of course—accordingly.

Faithfully yours,

PRIVATE NURSE.

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