



## 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 MARGARET HUXLEY GOLD MEDAL.

*To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."*

DEAR MADAM.—The nurses of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, are to be congratulated on the method they have adopted of showing their regard for their late Matron, Miss Margaret Huxley. The foundation of a gold medal in connection with the Hospital whose nursing-school Miss Huxley directed for so many years with such distinction is indeed a happy thought, and will, one hopes, serve to stimulate each nurse who wins it to follow in the footsteps of one whose integrity, high sense of honour, and professional capacity must command the respect of all her colleagues. While heartily according to Irish nurses the right to consider Miss Huxley as "one of themselves," I think we English nurses must claim just a little of her, too. Indeed, her qualities are the possession of the profession at large, which is richer for the gifts she has brought to the common stock, and freely used in its service.

I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

AN ENGLISH ADMIRER.

#### THE PEDESTAL OF THE HOSPITAL NURSE.

*To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."*

DEAR MADAM,—As an early member of the Royal British Nurses' Association, now resigned, I was very interested to read in your valuable journal Dr. Outterson Wood's letter and his views on hospital nurses. The latter sufficiently explain the objection of well-trained nurses to place themselves under the domination of Dr. Wood and his medical colleagues on the Executive Committee of this Association. Those of us who remember the foundation of the Royal British Nurses' Association in 1887—some time, if I remember rightly, before Dr. Outterson Wood was connected with it—recollect that it was founded by hospital Matrons, themselves trained nurses, and in consequence sympathetic with their aspirations for a higher standard of nursing education. Through their endeavours the three years' standard of training has now been almost universally adopted by important training-schools, and was from the first fixed as that of the R.B.N.A. These experienced Matrons did not hesitate also to say that in nursing education, as in all other forms of education, including that of medical practitioners, general training should always precede that received in a special branch, and on this ground opposed the entry of specialists on the Nurses' Register, whether experienced in obstetric, mental, fever, or other branches of nursing. They claimed that the best interests of these workers re-

quired that they should produce evidence of general training before being eligible to admission to a Register of Trained Nurses, and, in so doing, proved themselves the best friends of those concerned. I challenge Dr. Wood to produce proof of his statement that Matrons of hospitals "foster the delusion that asylum-trained nurses are the scum of the earth." I believe it to be both unwarrantable and gratuitously insulting. As for his candidly-expressed opinion as to the advisability of "knocking the hospital nurse off her pedestal," the more intelligent nurse members of the R.B.N.A. of course foresaw long since that this was the object of the policy inaugurated against them in their own Association, and naturally explains their resistance to the unjustifiable methods adopted to compass this end. The obtuseness, let us hope it is no more, of the medical officers of the R.B.N.A. with regard to nursing education has proved conclusively that the details of its organisation should be entrusted to experienced nurses.

Dr. Outterson Wood and his friends have at least taught us so much, and the lesson is one we have learnt at such a cost to ourselves we are not likely to forget it.

I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

MATRON.

#### THE STATE REGISTRATION OF ILLINOIS NURSES.

*To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."*

DEAR MADAM,—British nurses will read with mingled feelings the provisions of the Bill drafted by the State Association of Graduate Nurses in Illinois. Pleasure they must feel that so wise a Bill has been drafted by their colleagues in the West, and regret that, while British nurses were the first to urge the necessity for registration by the State, they should be outstripped in the race towards its attainment by nurses in other countries. Why, oh why, should we follow in the rear instead of leading the way? Is it that we have less conscience, less pluck, less ability to urge forward a movement cordially endorsed by the large majority of well-trained nurses, or is it that in free America projects for the good of the people have fewer difficulties to encounter than in the old country, and are therefore advocated with a better hope of success? Whatever may be the reason, it is somewhat ignominious to British nurses to reflect that in two British Colonies nurses have already obtained their registration, and in the United States the question is being pushed forward on a business-like basis, whereas in Great Britain its attainment is still in the distance. Surely these examples before us should urge us to put our shoulders to the wheel for "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether."

Yours faithfully,

WEARY OF WAITING.

[We agree with our correspondent that the position of British nurses, at the present time, in regard to their legal registration is not a pleasant one for self-respecting women. The lesson which they have to learn is that of combination, which involves the subordination of personal interests to the general good, and until it is learnt we shall continue to present to the world the picture of an unorganised, disunited profession.—ED.]

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