



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.

"NOT ALLOWED."

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was greatly amused to read in your journal last week of the institution where incompatibility of temper is not allowed. The recipe for its prevention would be worth its weight in gold if only the school concerned could be induced to publish it. Which of us does not know the difficulties of "temper" in the organisation of a training-school? One Sister, for instance, is an excellent ward manager; orderly, methodical, frugal, exquisitely clean, good to patients, exact in carrying out medical orders. "What a treasure!" says someone. Yes; but—there is so often a "but"—her temper is so sharp and uncertain that probationers dread being sent to her ward, and not unfrequently break down under the strain, not of the work, but of Sister's temper. What is a much-trying Matron to do? Remonstrate with Sister? This, if an unpleasant duty, is easily done, but not efficacious. Subject the probationers to unnecessary nerve exhaustion in addition to the strain of their work? This is what actually happens. Advise the Committee to ask for the resignation of a very valuable officer? It is a serious step, involving real loss to the institution, and would practically ruin the career of the Sister concerned. Yet, on the whole, I am inclined to agree that "tempers" should not be allowed in a public institution. Incompatibility there must always be where many persons of different temperaments and views are gathered together. This must be recognised, and with it the necessity for give-and-take. But if an official who is brought into relations with all sorts and conditions of people is unable to control her temper, she is the person at fault, and she, therefore, is the one who should take the consequences of her unfortunate failing, not the many others whose lives she makes miserable so long as she holds her post. Such at least is the opinion of—

A MATRON.

CHRISTIANITY AND CREMATION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, as usual, takes a sound, common-sense view of the question of cremation; but there is so much unconsidered opposition to this sanitary measure on the part of the orthodox that it is refreshing to see stated the views which you express. It is to me inconceivable that adherence to the principle of cremation should be construed into disbelief in the immortality of the soul and its ultimate union with the resurrection body. What this body will be we must wait to know, but it is surely permissible to assume that it is liberated by the dissolution of the one we at present inhabit, and, if so, then whether the present elements

which encompass it are resolved by "fervent heat or destroyed in any other way it matters little. For the rest we shall do well to wait and see, for if we "meddle in great matters which are too high for us" we get involved in endless difficulties. When the finite tries to explain things which concern the infinite he finds himself reduced to the creed of the Puritan, which, while it contains a modicum of stern beauty, is yet cold and cruel, and consequently unsatisfying and repellent. Let us be content to accept our position as finite beings and to own that there are things which in our present state of knowledge are unexplained though not unexplainable.

I am, dear Madam,

Faithfully yours,

CREDO.

THE COST OF PRIVATE NURSING HOMES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—My rent—including that on a new building just erected for my nurses, containing eight separate bed-rooms, bath-room, &c., adjoining my hospital—is £450. This includes all taxes and rates, except excess water rate, about £10 per annum. I will forward you photographs of my operating room and new quarters later on. We are so busy with the Victorian Nurses' Association that I have very little time for correspondence.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

E. GLOVER.

"St. Ives" Private Hospital,
East Melbourne, Australia.

[In publishing an interesting letter from Miss Glover in our issue of January 3rd ult., describing "St. Ives" Private Hospital, Melbourne, of which she is Lady Superintendent, we mentioned that we should be better able to compare the relative expenses of this Home with those in the West End of London if we knew the expenses of St. Ives in rent and taxes. We are obliged to Miss Glover for furnishing us with this information.—ED.]

"NO DEMAND."

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

DEAR MADAM,—A great deal has been done lately to make the mortuaries of our hospitals more worthy resting-places for the bodies of those who die in their wards, to abolish the gruesomeness which characterised them, and to make the surroundings congenial to those who visit them to take leave of their dead instead of striking a chill to the hearts of mourners. But still there is much required to effect all that one can desire in this direction.

The other day I had occasion to inquire of a well-known firm whether they had any movable bier for use in hospital wards, and was told that such a thing could easily be made, but there was "no demand" for it. It is surely time that there was a demand on the part of hospital authorities for something which will replace the black shell, borne on the shoulders of porters. The bier on wheels, which can be placed on a lift, and thus conveyed to any ward with ease, should be in every hospital. It should have a mattress covered with American cloth, made up as a bed, and be fitted with a light frame covered with a washing pall, preferably of white linen, and Turkey twill. In every case it should be accompanied by a nurse to the

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