



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.

OUR GUINEA PRIZE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Thank you for cheque received yesterday in connection with the Prize Puzzle Competition.

Yours sincerely,
T. HAIR.

The Great Northern Hospital,

HOW NOT TO BE NERVOUS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—With all due deference to Dr. Hugh T. Patrick, of Chicago, I am opposed to the toughening process for nervous children. I have seen it tried and fail in many instances, and in the hands of the nerveless—*vide* Mrs. Penruddocke—have known children suffer a martyrdom by being brought up on "a system" by unintelligent persons. Each human being has a "temperament," and it is the duty of those who care for the young to gauge that "temperament" and deal with the child accordingly. To procure toughness "exposure" and "mental hardship" and "bodily discomfort" may be efficacious. But "toughness" is not the only desirable quality in humanity—indeed, toughness means hardness, and surely we do not desire to revert to the insensibility to suffering and callous hardness of heart which produced in a past generation absolute neglect of the weak and suffering, as the records of hospitals, asylums, and "educational" establishments prove indisputably. I was lately greatly interested in reading the memorial tablets and tomb inscriptions in one of our oldest churches, where not only the name, birth and death of the deceased person are fully set forth, but also a somewhat detailed domestic history. What enormous families sixteenth and seventeenth century connubiality produced—often from twelve to twenty children—and yet it is no uncommon thing to find it notified that but one or two of the brood outlived the parent birds! This is significant; it is presumable that the offspring had been "toughened" into the grave, as records of the time tell of the arbitrary treatment of children by parents, even into our own generation. Then, is it too much to realise that each generation is becoming more high-strung, that is, more acutely nervous, less and less animal? One has to but compare the faces of this with a previous generation to know that slowly but surely each individual "ego" is by infinitesimal degrees asserting the power of mind over matter. As yet "temperament" has received but scant consideration from "scientists." It will be well for the world at large when women, who are undeniably on a higher nervous and spiritual plane than men, begin to search after truth, and study "temperament" in conjunction with other exact sciences. In the

meanwhile, do not attempt to wrench harmony from a racked nervous system—it is brutal and unscientific.

Yours truly,
GREY MATTER.

HOME HOSPITAL FEES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I read with pleasure the letter published in your valuable paper from Miss Glover on the fees for which patients can be nursed in a private home in Melbourne, as the subject is one in which I have for a long time taken a keen interest. I agree with Miss Glover that if it can be done in Australia, it ought to be possible in this country. It seems to me that the reason why fees of private nursing homes in London are so high (I do not say exorbitant) is because it is considered necessary for the large majority to be within a quarter of a mile radius of Cavendish Square, and consequently in a district where rents and rates are enormous and constantly increasing. But surely it is not essential that middle-class patients should be treated in home hospitals situated at the doors of the great consultants. The whole talent and capacity of the medical profession are not confined to Cavendish Square and the adjacent streets. Why should not private homes for middle-class patients be started in some of the healthy suburbs, where rents are cheaper, the air fresher, and where, as elsewhere, there are medical practitioners quite competent to treat disease? It seems to me that the middle-class public are to some extent to blame for the lack of adequate provision for them in case of illness, because the average Britisher is such a snob that he has a poor opinion of the professional qualifications of a medical man who has not attained some titular distinction. Of course, another point cannot be overlooked, namely, that people naturally like to be attended by a practitioner who has a reputation in connection with the particular disease from which they are suffering. How are reputations made? Through the most potent force in the world—the Press. If a leading luminary in the medical world performs an operation for a Royal or titled personage, the fact is notified by the morning papers to hundreds of thousands of persons. If the average general practitioner advertises himself he is hauled up before the General Medical Council for "infamous conduct" and runs the risk of being struck off the Medical Register, and consequently of utter ruin. Is it just?

But this by the way. The moral is that if middle-class patients desire to pay moderate fees for their illnesses they must forego treatment in nursing homes in the West End of London, and the attendance of fashionable physicians and surgeons, and go further afield.

Faithfully yours,
COMMON SENSE.

SURGICAL OPERATIONS AT PRIVATE NURSING HOMES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Can nothing be done in private nursing homes to prevent serious shock to patients in the following particular? Whether operations are done in the patients' rooms or in an operating theatre, is it not wrong that the whole paraphernalia should be

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