



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.

CHILDREN AND SWEETS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to read the remarks on this subject, which ought to be made widely known to the poor. In a parish in which I once lived there was a weekly expenditure of pence at the sweet-shop in one court on Sundays. Yet we are told that the poor or working classes cannot find the small weekly payments for a provident dispensary, but must have all medical attendance "free."

I would venture to suggest that your words, and the instance of poisoning given, should be issued as a leaflet by the National Health Society, 53, Berners Street, which has done so much in the way of instruction for the poorer classes on subjects which are wholly neglected by our schools.

It is, I believe, the feeding of infants and children which causes the enormous amount of mortality, and which athletics and drill will not diminish in later years.

LOUISA TWINING.

NURSING ORGANISATION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—As some time has now elapsed since you kindly published my scheme on nursing organisation in your Journal, I had expected that some nurse, or body of nurses, would have drawn up an alternative scheme for discussion. To my mind this important reform can only be brought about by obtaining the opinions of all grades of nurses, and then taking the best suggestions and bringing them before Parliament.

I think it would be useful if every two or three weeks you were to ask some question in your Journal on the methods of carrying out this organisation and registration of nurses, and invite answers to the same. I am sure that there are many nurses who could make some excellent suggestions in their answers; but when it comes to criticising a long scheme find great difficulty in knowing where to begin, how far to go, and where to end. I feel certain that the more this question is discussed, the greater will be the interest shown by nurses. The same apathy exists in the nursing profession as in all other professions. In order to get a thing done, no matter how beneficial it may be, it requires constantly bringing before those interested in all its different aspects, and eventually one and then another will begin to take interest and help it forward. At the same time, there are bound to be some antagonistic, and so much the better, for opposition is a keen incentive to further efforts. There are then left those poor, helpless sort of individuals, who prefer to sit on the fence and see which side is winning before taking a part. Those are the ones who grumble

afterwards, and wonder why such and such a thing was not done; but they are not of much importance, and can be well left in their own unsatisfactory state.

I think that one of the most important points with regard to this reform is that the legislation must be broad enough to take in all possible places of training, and not the now recognised training-schools alone. If this is not done the opposition will be long and bitter, and instead of bringing about a speedy solution of the difficulty, a lasting enmity will be created.

Believe me,

Yours truly,

C. A. DOUGLAS BRYAN, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
Spa House, Leicester.

NURSES AND THRIFT.

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

DEAR MADAM,—As an ex-policy-holder in the so-named "Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses," I have watched with an amused interest the correspondence between "Independence" and M. D. Brinton.

I am surprised to find that nurses wishing to retire from membership of that Society receive even part of their money back. When, for reasons which the founder of the Fund would not venture to discuss outside the offices in Finsbury Circus, I was "expelled" from the Fund, although one of the "first thousand nurses," and a collector for the "Benevolent Scheme" to boot, coming from Liverpool to attend the inauguration of the affair at Marlborough House, I had to employ a solicitor to obtain my money from the Fund. I was at first informed that the money belonged to the Pension Fund, and still its authorities hold £5 which is due to me.

I think "Independence" is learned in the tactics adopted towards nurses both in the circle of the Royal British Nurses' Association and that of the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses, and evidently knows well that the truth about the latter Society now under discussion is not to be got at by a correspondence in any journal. An editor is too much bound by the law of libel to allow the truth to be published, and why should nurses expect an editor to stand the brunt of investigation for them, because we dare not insist upon the right to discuss in open meeting matters which affect nurses only?

Instead of asking Sir Henry Burdett to give an opinion upon his own Stock Exchange methods, which must necessarily be biassed, would it not be more to the point if "Policy Holder" and M. D. Brinton would invite "Independence" and others to a Council of nurses, exclusive of laymen and doctors, and discuss the subject of the N.P.F., and hear from their fellow-nurses the complaints which are constantly being made against it? Then "young nurses would be sure as to how far it was to their interest to join it." I will offer a room in my house for the meeting.

Again, it is a lie for the advertisement requesting membership by nurses to the Fund to say that the Fund is open to every nurse. It is no such thing; it is only open to those nurses whom "we" choose to allow to join.—I am, Yours, &c.,

M.R.P.N.A.

Member of Educational Committee, West London
Co-operative Society.

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