



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,—I beg to acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of one guinea—puzzle prize. I enjoy guessing the puzzles very much.

I am,

Yours truly,

E. A. MARTIN.

50, Great George's Street,
Cork, Ireland.

WHO WILL HELP?

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

DEAR MADAM,—I wonder if you will add to your kindness, and allow me to put an appeal in your paper for our nursing work in Pemba? We have recently obtained our Bishop's leave to start a tiny hospital, where we shall be able to nurse our people to better advantage than in their own dwellings. The initial cost of mud buildings, with palm-leaf roofs, beds, mats, blankets, &c., for six or eight persons, with maintenance for a year, would be about £15.

Any help would be most gratefully received.

Yours faithfully,

LOUISE TAYLOR.

Universities' Mission to Central Africa,
9, Dartmouth Street, Westminster,
London, S.W.

THE ECHO OF MONASTICISM.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The extraordinary attitude of mind of some nurses on the all-important questions of professional education and status puzzles a mere laywoman, who, being something of an economist, cannot fail to approve of Registration.

Recently I was visiting a sick friend in the country, where a trained nurse was engaged, and incidentally I spoke with her on the subject of Registration.

"I don't approve of it," she snapped out, somewhat curtly.

"Why?" I asked, innocently.

"Because our Matron disapproves of it," she answered.

"What are her reasons?" I asked. I really wanted to know.

"I never asked her."

This made me sit up.

"Do you mean to say that on a question of such public importance you assume an antagonistic attitude without reason, without cause or consideration, because another woman tells you to do so? Is it possible that our hospitals are still governed by monasticism?"

"I don't know what monasticism means, but I do know that Matron's word is law, that obedience

is a nurse's first duty, that nurses with ideas are always in hot water; and I've got my living to earn, so please don't stir me up."

"I won't," I said, with compunction. I really was quite sorry for the poor thing.

"I have my living to earn." That is the keynote of the whole tune. I made it my duty to find out what sort of a living she did earn. She told me that her salary was £30 a year, washing and uniform, and she worked for forty-eight weeks in the year. My friend paid £2 2s a week and for the washing; so that I gathered that the hospital cleared a profit on her labour of two-thirds of her earnings, or something like £60 a year. Is it possible that such rank sweating is allowed under the cloak of charity? This poor nurse has never taken the trouble to total up her fees and compare them with her salary. I did it, and made her weep. She said she would much rather not "pry" into such things.

It appears to me somebody ought to "pry" and know the reason why.

Yours truly,

ECONOMIST.

[Charity covereth a multitude of sins.—Ed.]

MISS BEATTY DENIES THE SOFT IMPEACHMENT.

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

DEAR MADAM,—As I do not choose to be told that I am anybody's catspaw, I shall be obliged if you will insert the enclosed letter in your journal. Twice within recent dates, Mrs. Latter, late Matron of Chelsea Infirmary, and, I believe, a member of the Council of the R.B.N.A., has pertly said to me, at the close of meetings of the Association, "Why do you allow yourself to be made use of by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick?" This, presumably, because I have spoken in the interest of the nurses in the discussions at the meetings.

To put such a question to me, of all nurses, is on the face of it absurd to a degree; for if by my own strength of character, moral backbone, and by my own exertion I have withstood the bitterest boycott which could have been used towards a nurse, surely I am not a likely individual to play the "catspaw" to anyone, and, while I acknowledge that you are, in my opinion, the best exponent of the interests of the nursing profession, and the one who has championed our cause strenuously and successfully as only a nurse and a woman could do, I still must request you to favour me with space in your journal to publicly claim for myself the originality and responsibility for my own ideas, speech and actions; and I should be glad if you will endorse my statement that, prior to attending the two meetings alluded to, to consider the Bill for the Stated Registration of Nurses, I had no conversation or intercourse with you whatever on the matter, and, moreover, did not know that you intended to be present.

May I at the same time congratulate you upon the increased circulation which your admirable paper must enjoy amongst members of the R.B.N.A. from the childish action of the Executive Committee in excluding the publication from our reading-room at Orchard Street. I have several times requisitioned for it there, but without success—"it is not allowed."

Yours truly,

ALICE J. BEATTY.

[It is unnecessary for us to endorse Miss Beatty's

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