



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 FOR MAY.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Very many thanks for the guinea, which I received this morning. I was so pleased to win it.

Yours truly,

WINIFRED WALLIS.

Kensington Infirmary,
Marloes Road, W.

THE ENCYCLICAL FROM THE LONDON.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I quite agree with "One Who is Proud of having Worked at the London for Many Years" that "any Matron, Sister, or nurse has a perfect right to state her views on the Registration question in any way that is most convenient to her," so long as she does it at *her own expense*. I did not consider it a "breach of faith" to send you the printed letter from the Matron of the London Hospital for criticism, because I have always understood these circular letters were paid for by the hospital—that is, with money subscribed by the public, and I have never, therefore, looked upon them as private and confidential. If I am in error, perhaps some official at the hospital will prove to your readers that I am mistaken. As I firmly believe that State Registration of Nurses would be primarily for the benefit of the sick public I consider it most unjust that their money should be used to prevent their protection from unskilled women posing as nurses, whether it be by Miss Lückes in her "Encyclical," or by the members of the London Hospital Council, and I hope you will not let this matter drop until the anti-Registrationists are individually compelled to pay for their opposition to Registration, as we Registrationists are doing in support of our principles.

Yours sincerely,

ONE WHO HAS WORKED AT THE LONDON.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I also have worked at the London for many years, but I am strongly in favour of "the organisation of the profession of nursing by State Registration," and, moreover, am warmly in favour of co-operation of nurses nationally and internationally. I am never favoured with a copy of the "Annual Letter" from the London, but when the text is anti-Registration a friend usually forwards it to me to read; she cannot, therefore, consider it a "private and confidential" document. The identical letter under discussion makes it quite clear that the London is the headquarters of the anti-Registration camp, as Miss Lückes tells us that "we have reason to thank Mr. Holland for . . . the trouble he is taking to organise the united opposition of the majority of the leading

hospitals to the two Bills now before Parliament for this ill-advised proposal of the State Registration of Nurses"; and then follow pages attempting to prove that the trained nurses in all quarters of the globe are wrong, and that a few insular hospital managers and the Matrons in their employment are right, that we nurses are not capable of forming opinions on our own affairs, but, like bottle-fed babies, must thankfully swallow such "pap" as these infallible ones consider suitable to our infantile digestions. All this anti-Registration twaddle is exploded nonsense in these days—at least to broad-minded and public-spirited nurses—and, as you have written, it is not now a question if Registration is advisable—that is, of course, incontrovertible—but which is the best way of carrying it out. Little people turn round in office chairs and imagine that the motion portends that the world is revolving on its axis, and that the view from one window encompasseth the earth, to say nothing of the celestial sphere.

Yours,

ANOTHER LONDON HOSPITAL WORKER.

IS IT NURSING ?

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

DEAR MADAM,—After all that has been said and written of the perfections of the Holt-Ockley system of nursing, and the competence of its nurses, it was refreshing to read in your admirable journal the views of one who has appreciated its drawbacks. The one point which apparently is in favour of the Holt-Ockley system is its apparent cheapness, a point which unquestionably recommends it to those who desire to do their philanthropy at as little expense as possible. But even this, we learn, is "open to question," and what other possible merit is there to be urged in support of a system which advocates the employment of "nurses" with only six months' experience, and contends that they are trained ?

We nurses know that at the end of six months we are just beginning to realise the depths of our ignorance, that in our second year of training we begin to make some headway, and that the third year is worth more to us than the first and second together. The average member of the public, however, finds some difficulty in understanding that this is the minimum amount of experience on which nurses can be safely certificated. The more need, then, for the adoption of a definite standard to be attained, to be laid down by a professional body. Where would the medical profession be if its educational standards were laid down by the lay public? Certainly not in the honoured position which it holds at present. It is equally outrageous that nursing educational standards should be laid down by the laity; and our profession will never take the place to which it is entitled, and to which it can attain if proper standards are enforced, so long as every lay committee desirous of obtaining a nurse on the cheap can send a woman of the working classes for a few months' district training and receive her back as a trained nurse. Surely, like every other profession, we have a right to lay down our own standards, and to have the force of the law behind us to enforce their maintenance in the public interest. Then those who like to employ the ignorant and half-trained can do so at their own risk, but we shall no longer be saddled with their incompetence and its results.

Having worked as a district nurse, I can affirm that

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