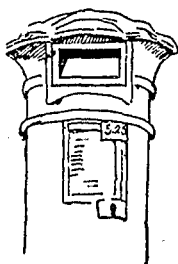


Letters to the Editor.

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.

DISTRICT NURSES AND THE PREVENTION OF TUBERCULAR DISEASE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—It has been suggested to me by more than one person that a strong weapon against the spread of tubercular disease amongst the working classes lies almost unused and neglected. I refer to the great organisations of district and cottage nurses which are spread over the land.

These women come in contact with sufferers from phthisis amongst the poor before they can be admitted to sanatoria and, in incurable cases, nurse them in their homes through the later stages of the disease.

I have had brought very forcibly to my notice over and over again the great ignorance of the poor as to the causes of consumption and the measures which they can themselves take towards safeguarding from infection those amongst whom they live.

I have often wondered that the Q.V.J.I. does not require its nurses to go through a special course of nursing for a few months in a well-managed sanatorium; it could easily, one thinks, be arranged and would be of inestimable value to the nurse in her after career.

As an illustration of the ignorance at present prevalent on the subject I may quote from a manual lately published on household nursing, in which the following dangerous teaching is given (after advocating the burning of sputum):—"What is coughed up by a healthy person should be swallowed, what is coughed up by an unhealthy person ought to be burned."

Anyone at all conversant with phthisical patients would know that they are the very last persons to admit that they are suffering from disease, and that the results of such a doctrine might very possibly be secondary infection of the intestinal canal—a generally hopeless complication.

In America, I am told, there is an organisation whereby nurses co-operate with the civil authorities to fight the "white plague" of consumption; something might possibly be done in this direction in England, perhaps as a special branch of the Society against Tubercular Disease now in existence. One would be glad to hear the opinions and suggestions of your readers on this subject.

Yours faithfully,

HELEN TODD.

The National Sanatorium for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest, Bournemouth.

NURSES' CO-OPERATIONS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The word "co-operation" implies combination for the common benefit. Yet how many nurses have this in mind when applying for admission to nursing societies based on co-operative principles? Are they not rather possessed by the idea that by joining a co-operation they will obtain the highest pecuniary return for their work, as well as enjoy personal liberty between their cases?

I do not desire to undervalue either of these reasons. They are the *raison d'être* of the existence of co-operations. Those who founded them realised the injustice of the utilisation of the skilled work of nurses to divert into the pockets of enterprising middle-men a substantial part of the earnings which were theirs alone. They realised also how unwholesome it is for any adult to be for ever under the control of an institution which relieves her of all personal responsibility, and so co-operations were started, and much good work they have done, both in securing to nurses their earnings and in the development of individual character.

But cannot the co-operators adopt yet another aim? Indirectly, no doubt, they inculcate professional ideals, but their avowed objects are frankly commercial only. I should like every such society to require a pledge from those who join it to adopt a simple standard of professional ethics, to undertake some work for the common good, and I should like also every member to realise that co-operation, like reciprocity, cannot be all on one side, and that she has duties to her society just as definitely as the society has to its members.

We hear a great deal about the deterioration of independent private nurses. Deterioration in every character there is bound to be unless kept in active unselfish touch with the lives of others. The true spirit of co-operation amongst a class of workers is an excellent antidote to deterioration, it means thinking for and *helping* others, and upholding the common good.

Co-operations of private nurses should in time supply the public with trained nurses. But this will never come to pass until those who join them realise the true meaning of co-operative action, and are loyal before all things to professional ethics.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

SOPHIA E. CARTWRIGHT.

Secretary Registered Nurses' Society, 431, Oxford Street, W.

A HOLIDAY HOME.

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

DEAR MADAM,—May I use a small space of your paper to say what a very pleasant holiday I have just spent at the Home of Rest, 12, Sussex Square, Brighton?

I arrived feeling very tired and lonely, but met with such kindness from the Matron and the other visitors that by the time my holiday came to an end I was most loth to leave them all.

I stayed for Christmas, which we spent very happily, which was due in a great measure to the

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