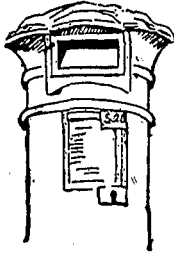


Letters to the Editor.

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.

PRIVATE NURSES' FEES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The fees which private nurses receive are a matter of primary importance to themselves, for often they have others depending on them. I must confess that I wish it were possible to make our fees a little more elastic. I mean that in many houses I go into the patients could well afford a higher fee than £2 2s., and I think that in a critical illness the skill and hard work, as well as the mental anxiety of the nurse entitle her to more. In other cases I would willingly reduce my fee if I could for I know that its amount costs my employer many an anxious moment, but I cannot afford to lower it in the one instance if I cannot raise it in the other.

I understand your point, that societies must have a fixed scale of charges, but I very much wish some means could be found of making the fee proportionate to the patient's means. Another point I should like to see discussed is whether the same fee should be charged for all nurses. Take a nurse who has great experience in abdominal nursing and whom surgeons will leave with the utmost confidence in charge of their bad cases. Is such a nurse to receive just the same fees as one who is only just beginning to make a connection in this kind of work? Or the nurse who is so popular that she is asked for many times in the twenty-four hours, cannot she command a higher fee than one who is rarely in demand, and so has to depend on the connection of the society to which she belongs for her work? If she cannot, surely a premium is placed on mediocrity. High quality in any class of goods commands, as a rule, a higher price than the inferior article.

I am,

Yours faithfully,
MARY E. FOSTER.

THE ROYAL NATIONAL PENSION FUND.

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

DEAR MADAM,—May I inquire if it is usual with insurance societies to ask for a fee when clients apply for information respecting their premiums. I ask because, recently applying to the Royal National Pension Fund to which I have belonged for many years, to know the additional amount I should have to pay, in order to get a pension at an earlier age than that for which I originally entered, I was asked for a fee of 10s. before the information was furnished to me. This I declined to pay, and obtained it

eventually, but I should like to know if it is the practice with ordinary insurance societies to demand a fee under similar circumstances.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,
M.R.N.P.F.N.

[We have made enquiries from the Casualty Insurance Company, Ltd., 7, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, S.W. and the Edinburgh Life Assurance Co., 11, King William Street, E.C., and are informed by the former that "it is not usual to make a charge on policy-holders or proposers when seeking information on insurance matters, unless done through solicitors, when occasionally life companies would charge a fee" and that the Casualty Insurance Co. "would certainly not make any charge for information."

The City Inspector of the Edinburgh Life Assurance Co. states that the company "in common with other first-class insurance offices makes no charge whatever for any information (whether it involves calculations or not) which it may supply to policy-holders about their policies.—Ed.]

FICTITIOUS NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was amused in reading "Profit and Loss" by Mr. John Oxenham, to learn several things about nursing at my old school "Bart's." For instance "Meg" is stated to be at the age of twenty-three a Sister there, and the best nurse they ever had at that ancient institution! Otherwise her nursing progress seems to have been quite in order. She passed all her exams., was promoted to "stripes" blue belt and blue gown, etc. "Meg" may have been a "born nurse" but as her mother kept a boarding house for medical students, with whom she joked unceasingly when off duty, it would be interesting to know how the "boys" treated her as head of the ward.

Yours sincerely,
MEMBER BART'S LEAGUE.

[The paragraph about "Meg's" promotion to "stripes" at Bart's recalls the change of uniform for "staffs" at that institution a quarter of a century ago. The Matron, after wrestling with the Committee for some weeks upon the necessity of substituting washing gowns for the prehistoric brown merino then in vogue—during which discussion one of the Almoners pleaded most pathetically for the retention of "the time-honoured brown livery—a veritable landmark in the 'ospital's 'istory,"—and having at last got permission to abolish these microbinous monstrosities, was interviewed by one of the probationers (who were selected from a better educated class than the worthy old "staffs,") who petitioned that as they became staff nurses they might still continue to wear their grey linen uniforms. The probationer argued that to wear the "stripes" would "degrade her class to the level of the staffs," to which the Matron replied: "That in future 'stripes' would signify promotion," and so according to Mr. Oxenham they do.—Ed.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)