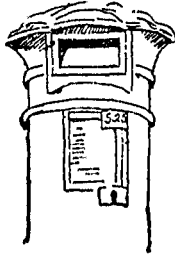


Letters to the Editor.

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.

WHO WAS WRONG?

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

DEAR MADAM,—I once heard of a case where the head master of a public school expelled a boy three days before his school career would have terminated, having discovered at the eleventh hour that the boy was guilty of a vice for which he had already expelled others less to blame than this one. The parents implored the master not to do it, knowing it meant ruin to his life, but, however much the master sympathised with the parents, for the honour of the school he represented he could not concede to their wishes.

It is often much harder to be just than generous. At first sight the case quoted in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, July 7th, 1906, sounds a hard and unfair one, but on thinking it over, I think the nurse in question must have lacked two things needful in the manners of every woman, and had forgotten the command to "be courteous, be kind." Perhaps if we knew more of the circumstances we should find it was not the first time her manners had been at fault, and that she had been previously warned. If so, my sympathy would be with the Matron and Chairman, who had so hard a task to perform in dismissing a nurse when she had almost gained her certificate, for the sake of the discipline of the training school for which they were held responsible.

"Sacking the nurse" does not sound quite the dignified expression one would expect to hear from a chairman of a hospital. It looks, in his case also, as if there was room for improvement in manners, especially when speaking in an official position. For that reason one would think, he would have a "fellow feeling" and would not use his influence in getting a nurse dismissed, for what must appear to him, an insufficient reason. He would think it an unfair thing to do, so again I conclude there must be another unexplained reason.

I hope there are not any Matrons still existing, who would, for self interest, side with the Chairman in doing an unjust act to a nurse, but if the Matron in this case, after receiving the nurse's explanation, still felt it her duty to report unfavourably about her to the Committee, knowing it must ruin her nursing career, and yet did it for the honour of the nursing profession and the good of the public, one must respect her for having the courage to do what was just, when one feels convinced it would be contrary to her inclinations, as a fellow worker.

Therefore, my conclusion is, the nurse must be wrong. For with nearly three years experience of hospital work, she ought to have realised the

necessity of being courteous to everyone with whom she was working, and especially to the patients who are very sensitive in little things, and who always respond to, and appreciate kindly manners, and thoughtfulness from their nurse.

Woodhall Spa.

E. J. HURLSTON.

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

DEAR MADAM,—As you ask for an expression of opinion on the above, I enclose mine.

Firstly, the Chairman for sweating a willing worker by imposing an impossible task in expecting nurses to work for longer hours at higher pressure than almost any other class of worker. Naturally being but human the nurse gave way.

Secondly, Matron in trying to work hospital with too small a staff;

Thirdly, Nurse in lack of courtesy, who though probably attending to a more urgent need, should have responded differently.

Unfortunately the nurse becomes the scape-goat, and the public, really the delinquents, get off scot free. Again the woman bears all the brunt, she is not a citizen, and, until she is, and can demand justice, impossible weights will be put on her shoulders directly she attempts to honestly earn her living.

Yours truly,

WILLING NURSE, UNWILLING SCAPE-GOAT.

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

DEAR MADAM,—If you ask me, I think everyone was wrong. The nurse for being discourteous to the patient. Why could she not have said: "Certainly, in a minute" and brought the water as soon as she was free? The Chairman for calling her over the coals in the ward, and for using slang, about so serious a matter; and the Matron for not reproofing the nurse kindly, making her see her fault, and for withholding the certificate after three years' work. Why, oh! why leave things to the last minute; surely if a woman is unfitted to be a nurse, somebody should find it out before the expiration of three long years' work, during which time she is under constant supervision?

ONLY A PROBATIONER.

CATHETERS AND CYSTITIS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—With reference to Dr. Gersuny's new short-curved glass catheter with a projecting shoulder, it sounds useful, but surely no injury to the bladder walls would result "if every possible care be taken," and, when only in the hands of an experienced person, no matter what kind of catheter is used. If external parts are properly sponged (with whichever lotion the medical attendant prefers), the catheter thoroughly sterilised, and hands surgically clean before removing it from the steriliser, no case of cystitis should occur by its use. In my experience I once had a patient who required catheterisation for four months, during which time she never had the slightest irritation. Had she developed cystitis, I should have considered myself to blame somewhere!

Yours sincerely, E. E. FOWLER.

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