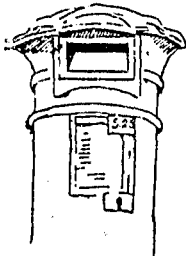


Letters to the Editor.

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.

NURSING ECONOMICS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—You will, I am sure, not expect me to discuss in your columns the "Nursing economics," as you call them, at the London Hospital. But there is one point connected with the "economics" to which I will refer, and that is the conditions of employment of our nurses. Our nurses have more time off duty, and better pay, than at almost any other hospital in England. Our nurses and probationers have three hours off duty every day, a whole day off every fortnight, and a month's annual leave, besides time allowed for attendance on lectures and classes, etc., instead of this coming out of their off-duty time.

In addition to adequate salaries every member of our nursing staff is entitled to a full pay pension for the rest of her life after eighteen years' service, dating from the time when she first entered the London Hospital Training School as a probationer. They are not asked to contribute any payments towards this pension. Every member of our private nursing staff is entitled to retire after the period of service referred to, on a pension of £55 per annum—an amount which any private nurse working on her own account would find it difficult to secure from her own earnings, however well invested.

And our private nurses are entitled to this pension, even if it suits them to take up lighter work elsewhere, after leaving us.

I assert with pride that our nurses' bed-rooms, sitting-rooms, sick-rooms, and food are unequalled, and I invite inspection, which is more than is done at least at one hospital that is doubtless well known to you, where no outsider, man or woman, has ever been able to penetrate into what is called its Nursing "Home."

It is not fitting to bring the honoured name of Miss Florence Nightingale into controversy, but as you refer to her, and claim, in common with all of us, that the skilled nursing of the sick was based by her on sound principles, I must remind you of the well-known fact that Miss Nightingale has always been strenuously opposed to the State Registration of Nurses, holding it to be entirely subversive of those same sound principles on which she, as "a woman of genius," organised from the beginning the training of skilled nurses for attendance on the sick.

Yours faithfully,

SYDNEY HOLLAND.

London Hospital, Whitechapel, E.

[We grant that much has been done of late years for the nurses at the London Hospital, but we claim more remains to do. We still desire to see the conditions of training and private nursing service altered. We want the probationers to have the invaluable third year's practical experience in the wards before certification; and before they are sent out as private nurses to compete with their colleagues from other schools. Last week we had occasion to question a London Hospital nurse on the details of her training, and although she has been in the service of the hospital for six and a half years, she has never been on duty in the gynæcological ward at all. Then we cannot agree that the private nurses do not contribute towards their pensions, as they are either working in the wards or earning fees, only half of which they receive in cash or kind. We claimed last week that Miss Nightingale "based skilled nursing of the sick on sound principles." We never stated that she had taken part in the organisation of nurses or their profession, two quite distinct things, though the one is the necessary corollary of the other. Miss Nightingale is, however, an honorary member of the Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States of America, and has expressed warm personal sympathy in the work of its leaders, who are registrationists to a woman.—Ed.]

TARRADIDDLES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—It is quite pitiful to see poor, starved-looking little children eating their hearts out at the toy-shop windows, or do you think the mere sight of the toys gives more pleasure than pain? I am thankful to see that *Truth* has collected over 30,000 dolls and toys for distribution at Christmas among the children in the hospitals, workhouses, and schools in London.

I once heard of a little East-End girl who said to her dresser: "I'll give you my bad leg if you'll give me the biggest doll off that tree," and who was terribly disappointed when told "he was afraid he could not place it amongst his Christmas boxes!"

SISTER C.

Notice.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

Those interested in the efficient organisation of nursing should procure the Annual Report of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses from the Hon. Secretary. Six copies, post free, 7d., or one copy 1½d. It gives a brief review of the history of State Registration.

All those desirous of helping on the important movement of this Society to obtain an Act providing for the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page xii.

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