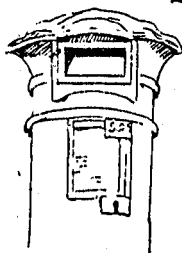


Letters to the Editor.

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.

MIDWIFERY PAPER PRIZE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Many thanks for the cheque for £1 10s., which I received this morning for my Midwifery Paper Prize. I read your paper regularly now as it reports such useful lectures, and is so very well written in every way.

Yours truly,

Cleobury Mortimer, Salop. A. NINA MORSON.

VOCAL EXERCISES FOR STAMMERERS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The subject of the cure of stammering has lately been brought before my notice in Manchester, and I think a few words upon it may prove interesting to the readers of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. Although it may be thought at first hardly a subject for a nursing paper, when we come to look more closely into the matter, and recognise how often stammering is first noticed after a severe illness, such as measles or scarlet fever, or after a fright, showing very clearly it is of nervous origin, one cannot but feel how very important the quality of gentleness is in all a nurse's dealings with children. But the method to which I want to draw attention is the "Berquand method," which seems to me both rational and natural, being founded on a system of vocal exercises. These vocal exercises are based on the law of phonetics, and on the principles of singing, and they are for that reason most rational when we remember that stammering does not occur in singing; they are besides most simple and natural, and are suited and would be of use to all, as the practice of them cannot fail to give clearness, firmness, and distinctness of speech. These exercises are so graduated that the pupils themselves are astonished at what they can do, they appear to surmount difficulties without knowing they do so.

Not only has this method been tried in Manchester during the last two years, with great success, about 80 per cent. of cures having resulted, but Professor Berquand has quite recently held a training class for teachers by which eight teachers from Manchester and surrounding districts were initiated into his system. It is interesting that such a useful and humanitarian work should be thus begun in the North of England, and it is also worthy of note that Professor Berquand was himself a stammerer and at the age of 25 cured himself by this admirable system of vocal exercises which he has perfected.

Yours faithfully,

LOUISA H. CLAY.

THE STANDARD FOR SCHOOL NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Why is it that if one writes a letter to the press those who differ from its contents always surmise that one has "rushed into print." I did no such thing, and maintain that after years of practical experience as a Queen's Nurse in town and country I have just as much right to form a reliable opinion on nursing standards as "A Former County Superintendent." This lady acknowledges at once that nurses in rural districts are "essentially midwives," and she also states that "during their twelve months' training in a recognised District Training Home they are thoroughly taught the elementary principles and routine of general nursing." What is a District Training Home? Is a hospital attached? Because, if not, then her contention "that they are capable of doing efficiently and well" the work of a School Nurse, I emphatically deny. Your correspondent claims that "in difficult and serious cases rural nurses have the help and advice of the County Superintendent." How is this possible, when in many instances these nurses are at work in villages upwards of fifty miles from the County Home, and are only visited at very rare intervals by the Superintendent? Maternity cases come and go, patients are attended, get well or die, and are never seen by the Superintendent, and many mishaps happen of which she is kept in ignorance. Local Committees of lay people and doctors manage local centres, and I know of cases of puerperal fever, the result of ignorance, carelessness, and neglect, upon the part of rural nurses, of which the Superintendent knows but little. I claim that a School Nurse should be a well-trained, certificated nurse, not a rural midwife, and I repeat that the affiliation of peasant midwives into the Queen's Institute is contrary to the intention of the late Queen, has lowered the standard of district nursing all over the country, and is unfair to the trusting sick poor. Women who are "essentially midwives" should be acknowledged as such (immensely useful and necessary they are), but they are not trained nurses, and not even a Duchess President can make them so.

A QUEEN'S NURSE.

THE RELATIONS OF MIDWIVES AND DOCTORS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In the letter which you publish from Mrs. Heywood Johnstone in the current issue of the Journal she says that "doctors object to be treated as the servants of the midwives." I wonder if your correspondent knows any midwives who treat doctors in such a manner. In a somewhat extensive experience of midwifery I have never met one.

In regard to the midwife who asked a doctor why he was employing another in "her district," obviously she had no right to a monopoly. But I should just like to point out that in no profession are areas more strictly preserved in connection with the right to practice than in that of medicine, so that the doctor in question seemed somewhat unnecessarily curt when he told the midwife to "mind her own business."

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