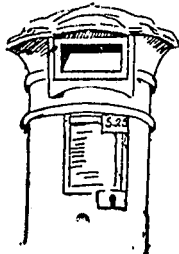


Letters to the Editor.



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.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS
To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I am at a loss to know what a "Matron of a Poor Law Infirmary" or Father Higley can find in my evidence which they can say is unfair to Poor Law Infirmarys. Father Higley says that "The best Poor Law Infirmarys compare favourably with the best voluntary hospitals." Just what I myself said, only I believe I said that they were better for some cases. I never said one word against the nurses in Infirmarys as the "Matron of a Poor Law Infirmary" suggests.

My whole evidence in connection with Medical Relief under the Poor Law was directed to the point that if it was ever to be more popular amongst the poor, it must be given less grudgingly. The sick poor do not care to receive the help they need only after severe cross-examination by a relieving officer, which happens in all the urgent cases, and it is monstrous that they should have the stigma of pauperism attached to this sort of help. My whole evidence was as to the feeling of the poor before, and not after, they had been admitted, and as far as I can remember, I only spoke favourably of the treatment of the poor when in the infirmarys. Of course, generally through the country, the Infirmarys (all but the best) are too often under-staffed with nurses, but I did not deal with that. So will the Matron and Father Higley kindly explain why they gibbet me? I am used to being kicked about in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, but then it is an editorial kicking to which I am getting hardened. Here I am misunderstood and misquoted by two correspondents.

Yours truly,
 SYDNEY HOLLAND.

Scotland.

PRIVATE NURSES' PROBLEMS: THE HOME HOSPITAL SCOURGE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am the proprietress of a private nursing home in West London, and find "private nurses' problems" without end. Perhaps if I may place some of my difficulties before private nurses through the medium of your valuable paper, they may be brought to the notice of those they most concern.

1. For instance, how about the gossip and tittle-tattle that goes on unceasingly by those private nurses who work temporarily in private nursing homes? As the number of patients is uncertain many Superintendents of homes engage nurses working on their own account, and who are members of reputable co-operations and institutions.

Some of these nurses are most discreet. They come, receive instructions, and do their duty to the entire satisfaction of the Superintendent and patient. They carry no gossip, and wisely refrain from mischief-making. Others, alas! behave quite differently. Instead of doing the work they are paid for quietly and sensibly, they no sooner enter the house than its inmates are regaled with their personal experiences in every neighbouring institution. How Miss So and So's Home is always full, or mostly empty. What she charges for her rooms. How many nurses are employed. The quality of patients' food, and that at the nurses' table! To say nothing of the average of disaster and death of the patients admitted!

This type of Home Hospital scourge has also an ever ending flow of criticism, concerning every surgeon and physician whose cases she attends, their professional standing, their profits and losses, their charges per operation, their successes and failures. Why Mr. So and So rushes around the Cavendish Square district in a motor car as if the Evil One was after him, when all the world knows "he has no practice," and why his next door neighbour hires his car when everyone knows "he is just raking in the shekels." At every meal this unprofessional and indiscreet chatter goes on, to the disgust of every well-trained woman at the table. The Superintendent, of course, dispenses with the services of this "blister" at the end of her first week, if possible. She also notifies the Superintendent of the institution to which she is attached, "that she does not wish Nurse So and So to be sent again." How can this problem be solved? It would be interesting to hear what can be done to stop it. It is a very real evil in our midst, and should be discouraged by every available means.

I am, yours truly,
 A SUPERINTENDENT WHO HAS SUFFERED.

Notices.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

The Editor will at all times be pleased to consider articles of a suitable nature for insertion in this Journal—those on practical nursing are specially invited.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

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.

An application form for those who wish to become members of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses will be found on page iii. of cover. It will soon be too late to help on the important work of this Society. No habitual reader of this journal can, we feel sure, be content to stand aside and let others found the future Profession of Nursing. Now is the time to help.

OUR PUZZLE COMPETITION

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

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