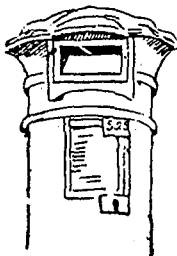


Letters to the Editor.



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.

A NURSE'S "WHAT'S WHAT."

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

DEAR MADAM,—The so-called "Reply" by the Hon. Sydney Holland in *The Nineteenth Century and After* to your article in the previous issue on the subject of State Registration of Trained Nurses is not likely to appeal to those who value and can recognise common sense. Mr. Holland begins by finding fault with his opponents for using the term "unreasonable" in connection with the Anti-Registration movement, and ends by accusing those who differ from himself as being guilty of "irresponsible and in some cases spiteful chatter." The old and dying argument that an Act of Parliament cannot register character is only a subterfuge. Does the London Hospital guarantee a nurse's character for all time; that she will never become "dotty"—a somewhat wide and indefinite term; that she will never be the victim of an accident which may injure the brain?

Few nurses are professionally alive in old age when "dottiness" (in the ordinary sense of the term) usually begins to show itself.

Mr. Holland advocates a "Who's Who?" for the nursing profession. Debreit and Burke are most useful and proper publications, I admit, but as you say, a "What's What?" is what is required for the nursing profession, not a "Who's Who?" and for this purpose a State Register is required.

There are few, if any, nurses who desire a register solely for the purpose of putting their names on it. Most nurses desire State Registration for the purpose of securing organisation in the profession, a legal status which will secure for trained nurses separation and distinction from quacks and other undesirables, and the protection and efficient care of the sick. Surely Mr. Holland will allow that these are laudable objects.

How the Anti-Registration Protest came to be signed by nurses, as Mr. Holland states, without any organised canvassing, is a riddle hard to read, and in connection with the subject of canvassing it would be interesting to know how much canvassing has been done recently by the Anti-Registrationists in connection with a certain appointment which has called down unqualified condemnation and contempt upon hospital governors and others who know best what their small purposes and petty motives are in degrading a training school and attempting by so doing to belittle the memory of one whose name will be held in honour long after their names have been obliterated by the merciful hand of time.

Mr. Holland is neither a nurse nor a doctor, yet it appears that he has assumed the right to speak

for both. At the present day it is quite too absurd that he should speak for either. If there are those who hold that he has a right to do so, then, I say, he is only one individual—one layman against thousands of professional persons.

These are, in a way, all small points—too small some will say for notice—but as Mr. Holland has been obliged to fall back on small points, exceptions to the rule, and subterfuge, he must be met on his own ground that some of the fallacies which he employs may be exposed.

I am, yours faithfully,

E. A. STEVENSON.

The Valley, Trinity, Brechin.

THE ASEPTIC SENSE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to note that your correspondent, Miss E. M. Dickson, in her useful practical hints to private nurses, published in your last issue, emphasises the necessity for keeping a special dress for wearing when travelling to a case and on similar occasions. Too often, I fear, this is not done, but one is used which will subsequently be worn in the patient's room. The hint that a bedpan should be kept for use wrapped up in a towel, and not put on the floor, is also not unnecessary; but both these points go to prove that the aseptic sense is still very rudimentary in some nurses, and that its development should be a matter of concern to those responsible for their education. If this were not so, would it be possible for nurses to risk conveying all kinds of microbes to patients for whom they honestly desire to do their best? What appears to me most necessary is to inculcate the principles underlying the practice of asepsis, not the elaborate precautions and routine to be observed in certain circumstances, as is often done. If principles are thoroughly assimilated, details may be left to take care of themselves.

As head of a private nursing institution, I find that I have to go very carefully over these principles with nurses joining the staff, as the knowledge of many leaves much to be desired, though the staff is selected from nurses holding certificates from "the best training schools."

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

SUPERINTENDENT.

Notices.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING is the official organ of the following important Nursing societies:—

- The International Council of Nurses.
- The National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland.
- The Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland.
- The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.
- The Registered Nurses' Society.
- The School Nurses' League.

OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

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

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)