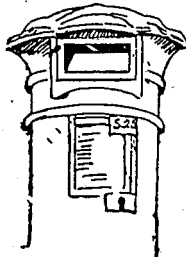


Letters to the Editor.



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.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to acknowledge with great pleasure the receipt of your cheque for five shillings, with copy of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, received the 3rd inst., which informed me of my success in the prize competition of January the 28th, in answer to the question: "Describe a Baby's Cries and What They Indicate." Wishing the Nursing Pageant the greatest possible success,

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

ELIZABETH BARTON.

Plaistow Hospital, E.

PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUBS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—May I ask you to find space in your valuable Journal for the following reply to your correspondent of January 14th, whose remarks on the alleged exclusion of nurses from professional women's clubs are hardly justified by the facts, as far as the newest of such clubs is concerned. Nursing, it is true, is not among the professions enumerated in a preliminary circular (which is not a prospectus), but it was never intended within the limits of a leaflet to enumerate specifically every profession, the members of which might prove to be suitable for a club which aims at securing the best that women are doing in every honourable calling. As a matter of fact, many callings are already represented which are not set out as "eligible" in print. There is not, and never has been, any "proposal" to exclude nurses as such. "Photographers, educationalists, and workers in the public service" are required to furnish evidence of the degree of distinction they have achieved in their professions, as well as social references, and so is every qualified applicant. Is it, then, a want of "logic" to require the same information from a profession in which it is admitted that at present "there is no standard for the public to judge by?" The members' application form for the Society for the State Registration of Nurses makes no mention of "public service," and therein applicants are also asked for information as to where they were trained, and what posts have been held, etc. The grievance is, therefore, quite imaginary.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A MEMBER OF THE CLUB COMMITTEE.

[We are fully aware of the difficulty of placing members of the nursing profession, as they are denied legal status.—ED.]

INTELLIGENT CO-OPERATION.

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

DEAR MADAM,—May I, through your correspondence columns, say how much I appreciate the "Clinical Notes on Some Common Ailments" which appear from time to time in your columns. They give one just the kind of information that one desires to have, but which is often so difficult to procure.

Further, Dr. Gordon always writes of nurses as if he valued their work, and appreciated their intelligent co-operation. It is so refreshing after the doctrine continually dinned into us, "A nurse's duty is obedience." So it is—obedience to orders when given, a loyal observance of what she believes would be the wish of the medical man in his absence. But this doctrine of obedience may be carried too far. If the doctor could foresee and give directions as to all emergencies which may occur during his absence it might work all right as an absolute rule. But, unfortunately, especially in private houses, unexpected emergencies occur with startling suddenness when the doctor is miles away. What of the nurse then who has no resources, when she has no explicit directions from the doctor in attendance to obey. She stands helplessly by like any untrained person. Surely the nurse whom the medical attendant can leave in charge of his patient with confidence is the one who is well-trained and experienced, loyal to his explicit directions, and known wishes, but resourceful in his absence, and competent to act promptly with judgment and skill, should necessity arise. The greater the understanding and confidence between doctor and nurse the better for the patient. Nothing is further from the desire of the well trained nurse than to usurp his province. She is only too anxious to get him on the spot with all promptitude should occasion arise. Meanwhile, she acts as his lieutenant—sometimes in circumstances of appalling urgency. Is obedience then the sole duty of a nurse? Surely they comprehend her duties ill who think so.

Yours faithfully,

PRIVATE NURSE.

Notices.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

A Prize of 5s. will be awarded each week during February to the writer of the best paper on the following subjects:—

In each of these competitions the answer should be from 300 to 500 words in length.

February 11th.—"How would you nurse a case of enteric fever, what emergencies might occur, and how would you meet them?"

February 18th.—"How would you ventilate (a) a hospital ward, (b) the patient's room in a private house?"

February 25th.—"How would you alleviate the discomfort of a patient to whom fluids have been forbidden for a period after an abdominal operation?"

Rules for competing for our Prize Competition will be found on page xii.

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