



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(Notes, Querles &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.

We shall be happy to answer, as far as we can, all questions submitted to us.

Communications, &c., not noticed in our present number will receive attention when space permits

A QUERY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir, - Could you or any of your readers kindly inform me if there are any private Nursing Institutions in Dublin or Belfast, or if any of the Hospitals in either city have a staff of Nurses for private work?—Yours, &c. WORKER.

[Apply to Miss Alison Lyons, the "Dublin Red Cross Society," 87, Harcourt Street, Dublin; or the City of Dublin Nursing Institution, 27, Upper Baggot Street, Dublin.—ED.]

THE NURSING RECORD POST CARD COMPETITION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Dear Sir,—Accept my sincere thanks for the books awarded to me for my answer to the first question of the Post Card Competition, also for your kind congratulations. On seeing your recommendation in the *Nursing Record* of Messrs. Burroughs, Wellcome and Co.'s feeding bottles in answer to my letter to "Inventions," I wrote to them asking for a specimen of their "Thermo-Safeguard" feeding bottle, which they have sent. They are *not* the old-fashioned bottle, but the ordinary feeding-bottle with a *tube* (which I greatly condemn), and which I am not allowed to use by three Medical men under whom I work. They are the bottles which I used to use, and I liked the glass stoppers, but what I want to find is the old-fashioned boat-bottle, with merely the teat fixed on at one end, and in the middle, instead of a cork placed in the hole through which the food is poured, a *glass stopper* or *indiarubber* instead of cork, which is porous.

I naturally have more knowledge of Midwifery than of surgery, but intend trying to answer all questions given from time to time, although I fear I shall not have much chance of being successful with those on surgical matters.—Yours sincerely,
EMILY SANDERSON, M. B. N. A.

The Laurels, Red Hill, Surrey.

HOSPITAL AND INSTITUTION REFORM VERSUS THE WORLD OF CANT.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—The pithy letter entitled "Saints or Sweaters," taken from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, leads one to exclaim what a tribe of "glorified barbarians" those Hospital and Institution Matrons, Nurses and committees must be! I suppose that that old adage still holds good, "It's a long lane that has no turning." And it is to be hoped that the question

of reform now at moot point, which began there, will not end at the London Hospital.

The time has come when, in the nursing world as in all other arts, there must be reform, absolute and complete. No half way measures, if you please, will avail here. And if the Nursing profession does not take the matter up, then if I rightly read the signs of the times, the outside public will. For the question must be answered, and answered to the satisfaction of all concerned, "Why is it there is so much sickness and death in their ranks?" The time has also come when this profession must show to the world what right it has to waste so much valuable life in trying to save the lives or alleviate the pains of others. Must we do evil that good may come? Assuredly not. It is health rather than wealth that is now in demand. We want above all else, health. Health is essentially the requirement of our time, especially amongst Nurses, to enable us to succeed. For I am prepared to maintain that by proper recreation and attention a healthy, energetic and vigorous frame may be had in conjunction with a powerful and vigorous intellect. The vitality of a nation, be it remembered, rests with and depends upon the conduct of individuals; the people now living are moulding the vitalities of those who have to follow them. Facts are stubborn things. And were the health of that right noble army of Nurses of ours to receive proper consideration and care, then I for one fail to see why these workers should die before the appointed time, when death would cause no terror and inflict no pain. Surely the health of the worker is as important as the income of our so-called charitable institutions.

"Charity begins at home," they say; and I would, therefore, venture to suggest that the "religion of cant" cannot go on for ever without a rankling somewhere. Here is a case in point: "I well remember living at one of those Nursing Homes, wrongly so called," says a practical woman, whose *bona fides* are to be depended upon. "Every Nurse was expected to go to church on Sundays, and so I must conform to the rules. Away we oftentimes went—wishing the church at Jericho—after sitting up for weeks together, say, from twelve to sixteen hours out of the twenty-four daily. Small wonder if, under such circumstances, we should go to sleep there; first asking our next neighbour to 'nudge' us for the singing. It is considered 'the thing,' you know, to go to church or chapel on Sundays. So much for keeping up traditional appearances!"

We want more practical and common-sense methods. Fresh air, after weary nocturnal watchings, is Nature's best and purest antiseptic. And all Nurses, if they would be strong and vigorous, want a free and plentiful supply of Heaven's pure air and sunshine ingrafted into their religion and less *cant*. All monopolies must be abolished. Social progress must be guided by accurate knowledge. We have had *random* work too long; as to the careful students of the perpetual "evolutions" of Nature nothing—no change—can come unawares. Look around you, and you will see the influence of the scientific spirit is now rapidly spreading in every field of human activity. Cities fall and kingdoms perish. All things in this world which had a beginning must have an end. Little as we may think of it the time is at hand when, in the Nursing profession likewise, there must be absolute freedom for thought. There must be scope for the free play of inventive knowledge; proper rest and recreation, plenty of out-door exercise, keeping from undue excitement and anxiety, thereby enabling us to bear annoyance with serenity; avoiding excesses of every kind, understanding our own bodies, and treating them the same as a good groom does a horse, would, I feel sure, enable us to live longer than our fellows.—Yours, &c., PHILOSOPHER.

Several communications unavoidably held over until next week.

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