

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.

TOYS FOR TINIES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Our Superintendent Nurse was greatly pleased with the charming Toys for Tinies, made by your readers, and so kindly sent to her for the children who last Christmas were in our Infirmary. As you know it is a quiet and out-of-the-way place, and we seldom have such gifts sent to brighten the lives of our children. We are hoping we may be fortunate enough to again receive our share of the Prize Toys.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A WOMAN GUARDIAN.

[The Notice of Our Prize Competition for Toys for Tinies will be found on page 229. We were surprised last year to hear from several Superintendent Nurses that very few toys were ever received as gifts, or for the amusement of the children in the wards of their infirmaries. We hope to have a very liberal response to the Competition this year, and intend that all the toys shall be sent to Superintendent Nurses as Christmas gifts for the little patients under their charge. Later we shall be pleased to hear from any Superintendent Nurse who would like to receive a parcel of toys.—ED.]

THE PLEASURES OF NIGHTNURSING.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—With regard to the Editorial in your 6th September issue, concerning Night Nurses, do you not think that many nurses who only live for their work for the time being and the joy of seeing any one patient less suffering and more comfortable for their ministrations, enjoy and look forward to night duty because often they can do so much more individually and *in detail* for patients.

I remember a fine young fellow with a terrible heart, from carrying the loads from the vans of one of the big carriers. He used to watch with longing eyes for a certain night nurse who was on duty in that ward, and in her third year. "Well, Price, how are you to-night?" "Oh, I'm that glad to see you Nurse," was the invariable night greeting; and as soon as there was a little lull, a cup of cocoa from the Nurse's night stores was brought to him, and later on another, or something else he fancied, and oh! the joy of easing his suffering path down the Valley of the Shadow of Death; and when towards the end, he was given at night a Hypodermic of Morphia, he used to say the first night or two to the H. S., "Please let Nurse give it me," and so the Dr. used to come up and see the dose prepared and given by the nurse.

One could cite dozens of examples, not to prove that a night nurse is any better than a day nurse; they all take their turn, but there is often time on night duty, without the rush of the day's doctors, dispensary, stores, meals, and a hundred and one other things to take up every second of one's time (and more!), to give more individual attention to the patients who are in pain or sleepless, that is one of the griefs of a nurse on day duty, that she cannot give. Personally in Hospital I loved night duty, and once got permission to stay on for a second term of three months. Night Sister used to say to me, "Its a perfect pleasure to come to your ward, *everybody* else is grumbling at being on night duty!" And then the patients need so much comforting and helping through the long weary hours of the night and what are women "Nurses" for, if their joy is not in such work.

Only this morning a little book of poems was lent me—one of them is called, "Night Service," and under the title is "Behold bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, *which by night stand in the house of the Lord.*" And, indeed, we in no wise lose our reward even in this life.

Would that some of the old sense of "Vocation" could be re-introduced into the most beautiful profession on earth.

Yours truly,

A FORMER NIGHT NURSE.

THE CARE OF THE DEAD.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM.—The public generally are just now very profuse in making suggestions for encouraging women to enter the nursing profession—the shortage of good material is very incommoding. To Mr. W. Stuart Morrow we owe the suggestion in a Liverpool paper "that it should not be part of a hospital nurse's duties to prepare corpses for burial; they should be left to the undertaker or to special attendants. Few can realise" (he writes) "the horror with which a young nurse forces herself to perform this most gruesome task."

To know that their poor dead are reverently handled after death is one of the greatest consolations to the poor, whose relations and friends die in hospital. The poor who use these institutions feel very keenly about due reverence being paid to the dead; and in the meanest home will spend the last farthing in providing honourable burial. Tender-hearted nurses sympathise deeply with this evidence of affection, and would be the last to wish it outraged by handing over the bodies of their patients to an undertaker or even special attendants. The woman who has a horror of death is not in her right sphere in a hospital ward; and although it is her keenest joy to keep him at bay, when he conquers she recognises his victory with awe, and performs the last offices for the dead as her special duty.

Yours truly,

A LIVERPOOL NURSE.

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