

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.

PROFESSIONAL UNITY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—How is it that every one seems starting Nurses' Unions? Here in Yorkshire we are fairly mystified. What is the difference between the National Union of Trained Nurses and the Nurses Union? Whenever I attend a meeting for forming nurses into a new society, the lecturer assumes that there has been no previous co-operation in the ranks of the nursing profession. Why? I have been a member of the R.B.N.A. for many years, from the good old days when it won its Royal Charter. I know it fell away from its early principle of registration, but now that several of those who acted so unwisely have passed away, the Association is one of the societies appealing to Parliament for a Nurses' Registration Act; why is it necessary to form other Unions, and why two—neither of which approves of the other, or has any definite policy to help to place the nursing profession on a secure legal basis, so as to prevent the sweating of nurses, or the use of their uniform, for decoy purposes, by immoral women. I think every nurse should work for registration first—then one could really make a National Association, and put down abuses. Also as religion was much spoken of at the meeting I recently attended, and as Roman Catholic Nurses I know would not join a Union to take part in Bible Study and prayer, services in our churches, etc., sectarianism would certainly prevent any degree of national unity on such a basis. I do think the objects and work of all these competing Unions for Nurses should be plainly set out, so that we could know what to join and what to avoid, and who is running them. Advice on these points would be valuable to many of us.

Yours truly,

R.B.N.A.

[To reply to all these questions requires an article, which we will publish as soon as time and space permits. In the meanwhile, perhaps those interested will reply to some of the questions. We are entirely at one with our correspondent that so many rival societies of nurses weaken effective professional unity. But so long as the profession is not legally constituted such disorganization must continue. Societies of a religious character will do little to mitigate economic abuses—to do this means fighting crafty and unscrupulous people, from which the conventual temperament naturally shrinks. —ED.]

ONE CHOSEN, THE OTHER LEFT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I recently applied to be trained in a once famous Nursing School. Applicants were gathered together in a little back room awaiting interviews with the Matron; imagine my surprise when a former very stupid domestic in our family took a seat beside me. I learned she also was a candidate. Unwisely, perhaps, I asked the Matron if it was possible for uneducated girls to pass the standard of examination, and was sharply informed that "the Chairman preferred the servant class"! Also I learned that as there was no modern Nursing Home, two probationers might have to sleep in one room. Needless to say, I was not a selected candidate, but the other was. No doubt the nursing world is a republic. I am not claiming any advantage for class, but for culture, refinement, and sound education, all of which should go to make the best type of nurse.

Sincerely yours,

A DISILLUSIONED DAMSEL.

BUSH NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—My attention has been directed to a paragraph in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING relating to salaries paid to Bush Nurses.

The salary is £135 per annum, the nurse to board herself when not actually resident at a case. In addition to this the nurse gets free conveyance to the district in which she takes up work, and three weeks' holiday on full pay. As a matter of fact we find that the nurse, after paying for her board, has from £100 to £110 a year for her own personal expenses.

Yours, &c.,

JAMES W. BARRETT.

105, Collins Street, Melbourne.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

February 7th.—In nursing a case of diphtheria what possible complications would you guard against, and how? What precautions have you seen observed for the safety of contacts?

February 14th.—(a) Define the terms colostrum, meconium, ectopic gestation. (b) By what means does the foetus receive nourishment?

February 21st.—What special care should be given to a child with measles; what precautions should be taken with reference to the room?

February 28th.—What do you know of the following diseases:—(a) Rickets, (b) gastric ulcer? Describe the nursing appropriate to each, and the treatment you have seen prescribed.

NOTICES.

Letters have been forwarded to various sources, including Fraulein Hartmann.

The Editor is always grateful for newspapers containing nursing news, but is too busy to hunt for it, unless the paragraph to which it is desired to draw her attention is boldly marked.

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