



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(Notes, Queries, &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.

THOSE FOUR LEADING DEPARTMENTS;
OR, THE GOSPEL OF "GIVE A FELLOW A LIFT."
To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—Yes! it is quite true that "supply and demand" own the largest mill on earth. But even that diabolic law will yet have to stand by, and instead thereof we must have the law of *love one another*, the law of pull together, the law of genuine kindness, the law of pure sympathy.

Strongly in favour of "specialism" for Nurses—viz., Hospital Nurses for their own department, Obstetric Nurses for Obstetric Nursing, Private Nurses for private nursing, superior and thoroughly practical and well trained all round medical and surgical District Nurses for this department, may I ask your permission to draw the attention of such of your readers as are desirous to post up in the latter department, and who may not have seen the books to, "A Sketch of the History and Progress of District Nursing," by W. Rathbone, M.P., and "A Guide to District Nurses," by Mrs. Dacre Craven, both published at half-a-crown each, by Macmillan and Co.?

"During the Revolutionary War," says Talmage, "there was a heavy piece of timber to be lifted, perhaps for some fortress, and a corporal was overseeing the work, and he was giving commands to some soldiers as they lifted, 'Heave away there! yo heave!' Well, the timber was too heavy; they could not get it up. There was a gentleman riding by on a horse, and he stopped and said to this corporal, 'Why don't you help them lift? That timber is too heavy for them to lift.' 'No,' he said, 'I won't! I am a corporal.' The gentleman got off his horse and came to the place. 'Now,' he said to the soldiers, 'all together, yo heave!' and the timber went to its place. 'Now,' said the gentleman to the corporal, 'when you have a piece of timber too heavy for the men to lift, and you want help, you send to your commander-in-chief.' It was Washington! Now, that is about all the Gospel I know—the gospel of giving somebody 'a lift,' a lift out of darkness, a lift out of Tophet into heaven. *That is the gospel of helping somebody else to lift.*"

THE YORKSHIREMAN.

IS CO-OPERATION A PANACEA?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—Replying to your correspondent, "Co-operation," at a time when Nurses have not the remotest shadow of confidence in their so-called leaders left, it would surely be an anomaly to stir up a controversy on co-operation.

"Is Co-operation a Panacea?" John Stuart Mill, who, you will remember, devoted much earnest thought to this subject, long cherished the hope that in some unexplained way it might prove itself to be so. In 1874 Professor Cairnes wrote as under: "If workmen do not rise from dependence upon capital by the path of co-operation, then they must remain in dependence upon capital; the margin for the possible improvement of their lot is confined within narrow

barriers which cannot be passed, and the problem of their elevation is hopeless. As a body, they will not rise at all. A few more fortunate than the rest will from time to time escape, as they do now, from the ranks of their fellows to the higher walks of industrial life, but the great body will remain substantially where they are. The remuneration of labour as such, skilled or unskilled, can never rise much above its present level."

More than sixteen years have passed since these words were written, and it must now be apparent even to the most sanguine that matters are to-day less hopeful than ever. In the teeth of such facts, you are to be complimented upon your "discreet silence," for we want progress, not destruction. As regards co-operation and remuneration, the advantage of the former to the latter is, to say the least, doubtful—therefore must be already obsolete. If this be so, our Nurses must look for their redress elsewhere.

Quoting from one of your annotations, "Nothing retards the progress of women so much as this pettifogging jealousy of one another." First one would-be leader arises and then another, each in turn crying in the wilderness, "Follow me." Presently, however, our Nurses falter by the way, fall into a ditch, and are left there. By the time they have managed to scramble out again, and make themselves a bit "decent-like," another plaintive voice is heard to cry, "Follow me"; thus the weary round goes on for ever.

Now I would venture to suggest that all these partisans be allowed to pass in review; and in the meantime, let our Nurses unite or combine to take notes, and in so doing think out ultimately a plan of campaign for themselves. I would make all alike; for the one thing above all others to bring those meteor-like, unstable, and platinum leaders of ours to their senses would be to turn them out in a pouring rain, and then, without exception, hang each in turn out to bleach upon a good clothes-line for an indefinite period. But pending this "process," our Nurses should be asked to abstain from eating each other, picking the flesh off one's bones, as this body are, they say, only as yet a few paces removed from downright cannibalism.—Very truly yours,

JOSEPH WATCHFUL.

COMPETITIVE PRIZE ESSAY.

TWENTY-FIFTH COMPETITION.

A Book or Books of the value of One Guinea will be awarded for an Essay upon the following subject:—

"Give a History of the Work and Progress of Nursing during the Present Century."

RULES.

1.—Contributions to be sent to the Editor, at the office of THE NURSING RECORD, addressed as follows not later than August 8th, 1891:—"Prize Essay Competition, THE NURSING RECORD, St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, London, E.C."

2.—Manuscript must be written distinctly in ink and on one side of the paper only, upon not less than 24 nor more than 48 pages of ordinary-sized ruled sermon paper. The pages must be numbered and fastened together.

3.—The real and full name and address (stating whether Miss or Mrs., of the Competitor must be inscribed on the back of each contribution, and notification of which Hospital or Institution the Competitor has been or is attached to.

4.—Trained Nurses or those personally associated with Nursing work only allowed to compete.

Winners in previous Competitions are permitted to compete, but in case of a "tie" the prize would be awarded to the Competitor who has not secured a prize before.

The decision of the Prize Essay Editor to be final, and any infringement of the above Rules will be considered a disqualification.

NOTICE.—The Prize Essay Editor will not undertake to return MSS. unless accompanied with a sufficiently stamped addressed envelope; and in no case will he be responsible for any loss of same during transmission, &c. In no case must manuscripts be rolled up when sent by post; they must be folded.

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