



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.*

BAKSHEESIL.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—As you, week by week, put your Editorial finger upon the weak spots of Hospital administration, perhaps you will be good enough to publish a short letter on a subject to which at present you have not alluded, and which is felt in its most aggravating form at this festive season. I allude to the system of petty taxation levied upon the Nurses of our public Institutions to provide presents to the officials, &c. During the period of training we Nurses receive only nominal salaries, usually enough to pay for our personal washing and stamps, and without help from home it would be quite impossible to pay for the necessaries of life. How undesirable the system of testimonials to resident officials is can only be recognised by those who hear the complaints amongst the Nursing Staff each time a new scheme is proposed to which they are asked to contribute, usually by a sub-Matron, who conveys the impression to the unwilling, and often almost penniless Nurse, that it would be *unwise* to refuse the request. I have known dozens of cases where Nurses have had to borrow half-a-crown from a colleague to contribute to an

extravagant gift to be presented to a well-paid superior, thus contracting debts and a bad habit, which is very demoralising. I do not believe the Committees recognise the growing extent of the evil, or they would at once forbid the acceptance by resident officials of all gifts from the rank and file.—I remain, Sir, yours truly, A PENNILESS PRO.

[We have had this matter before us for some time, and our correspondent—whom we thank for her letter—will see the subject referred to in another column this week.—ED.]

NURSES' HOLIDAYS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—A word on Nurses' holidays. I lately gave the Nurses' regulations for a Home Hospital. I advised that they should be off duty two hours a day, and half-a-day from two to ten, once a week. As it is impossible to regulate the management of a Home Hospital with the precision of a Hospital ward, and Nurses sometimes lose their time, this should be taken into consideration by the Superintendent, and extra time given between cases. All Nursing is necessarily exhausting work, physically and mentally, especially the Nursing of the better classes, therefore, the Nurses should be entitled to three weeks' consecutive holidays in the summer, and a short holiday in the winter of not less than a week's duration—if more can be given, so much the better, and so much the better will the work be done. I am also strongly of opinion that Home Hospitals will only be thoroughly well organised when the Nursing staff is permanent. No "Home" should send out Nurses to private work who are on the Hospital staff—as the plan creates disorganisation and confusion in the house—and a lack of interest in its welfare; indeed, unless housed altogether in a separate establishment, they should not be supplied at all, as the quiet and privacy of the Home is greatly disturbed by the coming and going of a staff of

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