

"THANK YOU."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Having just read your letter in this issue of the *Daily Telegraph*, I feel impelled to say "Thank you." I agree that the lot of the Nurses is certainly better than formerly. It still ought to be further improved to allow them to give of their best.

Particularly interested in your second point on diffusion of peace and good will to the sick.

To show my sincerity in a practical form I cheerfully forward you 2s. 6d. in stamps to assist in the good work of Nursing.

I beg to remain a humble unit of the public.

Yours faithfully,

Lawefields Cotts, Wakefield.

G. M. HYDE.

[The Editor in thanking Mr. G. M. Hyde for his kind gift, informed him that it had been placed in the Florence Nightingale Thanksgiving Box of the British College of Nurses, in support of the Scholarships appeal.]

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE NURSES' WORKING HOURS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Once again the British College of Nurses, through its untiring President, has given publicity, through the courtesy of the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, to the injustice meted out to patients and the Nursing Profession by a large Municipal body, who without consultation and trial have altered the timetable of a number of hospitals under its control. A new scheme involving complete change in duty hours, etc., surely needs to be attempted by a Matron well versed in her own hospital routine before definite orders are given to a large number of such institutions. The result of this alteration has led to much dissatisfaction and friction, and if such methods are encouraged the Nursing Staffs concerned will suffer serious consequences and lose much of their vocational spirit. To be left as the only member of the staff in a ward even if only for a quarter of an hour, can have disastrous results.

Twenty years ago the usual hour nurses went off duty at night was 9 p.m.

Of recent years 8 p.m. has been a popular hour in most hospitals and allows for some social intercourse and recreation before retiring.

The shortened period for dinner hour necessitates a rush to the messroom and a rush back on duty without even time to perform one's toilet: can this promote the health of nurses? It is physiologically an unsound principle, and we of all workers should be permitted to conform to the laws of health.

Psychologically, the scheme is also unsound, as it is endangering the mental outlook of the nurse, who will now watch minutes off duty and measure her time perpetually.

Shorten Nurses' hours by all means, but give time for rest and recreation on hygienic principles.

A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

The L.C.C. and its Nursing Staff.

The Editor has received a number of letters in reference to her letter in the *Daily Telegraph* on October 16th, from which she quotes a few opinions from past and present Matrons, Sisters and Nurses.

MATRONS.

"I want to say a very big thank you for your kind interest shown in the splendid letter you sent to the Press. I know some of the Matrons have been very distressed that they were deprived of the privilege of giving passes of leave which would enable Ward Sisters to attend church.

I understand it was pointed out that this could be easily arranged without exceeding the off-duty hours."

"This is just to thank you for the letter you sent to the *Daily Telegraph*. It does seem strange that such clever people as are supposed to be at the L.C.C. cannot be a little more human—they might be Russian. The work in hospital has always been arranged so that all members of the Staff could attend their place of worship at least once on every Sunday. I suppose the age for any sort of sentiment has gone."

"I must write and tell you how much we appreciate your excellent letter in the *Telegraph*. I have protested against the new time table, but have had no reply to objections... again thanking you for your energy as champion of our cause."

"We read your letter in the *Daily Telegraph* with relief. The fact is there has been nothing but disorganisation since the Socialist rule at the L.C.C. The nursing staff realises that when the head of their department is ignored they are the first to suffer."

SISTERS.

"Every Sister in this building has read your champion letter in the *Daily Telegraph*; we feel sure it will have effect. It is easy enough for committees to make rules behind closed doors, but exposure in the Press will, we feel sure, bring redress. We all most strongly resent that extra half hour on duty every night from 8.30 to 9 p.m. It is the last straw. Only nurses realise the strain and sort of dull despair that last hour exacts, one is simply not fit to take on a whole ward of poor sick people after a long day's work—even if they are in a normal condition, which many are not."

"What a blessed surprise in the *Daily Telegraph* yesterday—the church I love is half an hour away from this hospital, not to be able to attend its beautiful and inspiring services leaves me sort of drooping for the rest of the week. We nurses need spiritual support to sustain us in so many difficulties which face us day by day if we are to give out all sick people need."

"Since reading your letter in the *Daily Telegraph* I wish to express thanks for it. Circumstances have arisen during that quarter of an hour's solitude between 8.30 and 9 which would rouse public indignation if they were made public, and if the indefensible arrangement of leaving one nurse alone on duty continues, scandals there are sure to be. Also what use can be made of a two hours' leave by nurses working miles from centres of recreation and their friends? It is just a trot out on tired feet and back again."

NURSES.

"I am ever so grateful for the publicity given to your letter in the *Daily Telegraph*. The truth is County Hall needs a soul and also to realise that the nurses in L.C.C. hospitals have as much right to be consulted concerning social conditions of service as the members of male trade unions, 'who can do no wrong' under Socialistic rule. Listen to County Hall: 'Here, you women, toe the line—gobble your rations, and hustle back on duty. No time for toilet. Can't attend if alone on duty to half a dozen bad cases, dying people, emergency accidents, preparation for the theatre, restrain a suicide from flying out of the window or cutting his throat behind the scenes? Well, if you are so incapable of managing these little incidents as they arise what are you fit for? You will certainly never attain the L.C.C. standard and be worthy of a Certificate and Medal.' Of course we are ourselves to blame for failing to co-operate, so may I have a form of Application for the British College of Nurses."

PRIZE COMPETITION FOR DECEMBER.

What is the cause of Eclampsia? Describe the nursing of such a case.

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