

Letters to the Editor.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—You have proved so often the friend of Nurses, that I ask what I, and other Nurses situated like me, can do? I entered at a Hospital, which shall be nameless, and signed an agreement to work for the full period of training in its wards. I am very fond of the work, and want to learn and get on, and I don't grumble at work, and I think those who want to grumble would be better out of Hospitals altogether; but when I had been six months at work, one of the doctors asked the Matron to let me go and nurse his little girl, and I was away three months. He was most kind, but the dear little mite had hip disease, and I didn't learn a thing, although the rest and good food did me a lot of good. Well, the doctor told the Matron I was a splendid Nurse, and so as soon as I got back, I was sent off to a case of paralysis, a young lady, who was no more paralysed than I am, because, just to try, the doctor set some wool on fire in the grate; I gave a little scream, and the moment she saw the flame she hopped out of bed, and was half way down the stairs before one could even laugh. Well, the doctor said I was just the Nurse for her, and as the Matron told him I was thoroughly trained, I can't ask him to let me go back to the Hospital. So for six months I have had to manage a hysterical girl, and as far as I can see it will be another six months before I can get away, if things go on like this. Matron writes and says I "reflect the greatest credit on my Hospital," because the people here have sent a large donation and a flattering letter about me to the Committee, and when I write and ask to be allowed to go back and learn some Nursing she writes and says that "theoretical knowledge in a Nurse is valueless, compared with habits of gentleness, kindness, sympathy, and tact," and that I am "acquiring these inestimable qualities by my present work, while self-sacrifice of one's own wishes and hopes is the crowning virtue of a Nurse." It

all sounds very beautiful, but I went to the Hospital to learn Nursing—and I haven't learnt much yet, and at this rate I don't see how I shall. I feel somehow as if I was not being fairly treated, for here have I earned £130 for the Hospital in nine months, with that donation, but I have only been paid £11 myself, and I feel like a horrid hypocrite, too, because I am passed off on these kind people as a thoroughly Trained Nurse, when I know next to nothing. I wish you would tell me what to do. It seems to me the Hospital is deceiving both me and my patient, and the public seems, like me, quite

HELPLESS.

[Bravo, Nurse. We answer your question in another column.—Ed.]

Replies to Correspondents.

Nurse Eva.—Nurses are rarely or never spoken to when on duty by their Christian names. The Sisters are usually addressed by the name of their wards.

A would-be Nurse.—1. You will obtain all the information you require from the Nursing Directory (price 5s. from this office). 2. Do not go to a Hospital which trains for less than three years, for that is the standard to which all trained Nurses will undoubtedly in a very short time be expected to conform. 3. Certainly not—refuse to sign any such agreement. To promise to teach you for two years and at the end of one year to send you out to make money for the Hospital, is simply defrauding you of your education, and deceiving the sick to whom you are sent as a "thoroughly trained Nurse." No woman with any self respect would submit to such treatment for an instant. See letter from *Helpless* in this week's issue.

Mr. H. S. Alexander.—Many thanks. We find that one of our staff has already made excerpts from your very conclusive letter, and they appear in another column this week. We earnestly hope that you will, with equally trenchant effect, deal with the serious Nursing scandals at the London Hospital.

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