

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

DEAR EDITOR: I wish the leaders in the general discussion of nurse training, now busy in writing up professionalism, preparatory schools, State registration, etc., etc., would turn their bright minds upon the question of what to do with unworthy graduates, how to guard even an ordinary training-school, to say nothing of a State register, from the discredit of young women who are disgracing their diplomas. No school in the country is without its unworthy graduates, women who have entered the hospitals on credentials as to general excellence which cannot be gone behind, women who perform their duties creditably, pass their examinations well, and, successfully eluding the watchful eye of officers, carry off their diplomas after two or three years of *hospital* training, and reveal in *family* practice their selfish unfitness to be trusted in a sickroom. Such women are careful to join some nurses' club, some alumnae association, where an *esprit de corps* refuses to accept any statement to their discredit and resents any unfavorable criticism. Women of this class, falling back on the testimonials which first introduce them to the hospital, indorsed by the alumnae, holding a diploma, and passing any examination as to their intelligent knowledge of their profession, would certainly be admitted to State registration, and, doubly indorsed, be let loose on the helpless public. What would you propose as a remedy for this state of things, which exist now in every training-school, if the truth were known? It is useless to say, be more careful about the selection of pupils and more strict as to requirements for graduation. Such cases would not be touched by these precautions. They are generally smart women who have been politic enough to do well till their diploma is secured, and who as private nurses disgrace their schools.

The trouble does not "correct itself;" families worry along with the nurse and are thankful to get rid of her on any terms when her engagement ends. They will not embroil themselves with her by complaints, and so she carries her selfish "professionalism," her opium and gin habit, into other distressed homes. What redress has a school under such circumstances?

All other professions have means of ridding themselves of unworthy members. Even the Stock Exchange expels a man for questionable practices, lawyers are disbarred, and physicians are turned out of medical associations. Graduate nurses only flourish their diplomas, and pursue their unlovely way.

In the interests of a long-suffering public, the whole question deserves the careful consideration of the bright women who lead and grace their profession. The protection of the trained nurse by associations and journals and professional regulations of all sorts is all very well, but how is society to be protected from the trained nurse?

A MEMBER OF A TRAINING-SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

DEAR EDITOR: The subject of non-graduate nurses seems to be occupying the minds of both the medical and nursing professions just now. It seems to me