

MR. BARNARDO AND SISTER CLARA.

WE had hoped, as expressed in our last issue, to have been able to explain, by *extracts* from such correspondence as is in our possession, briefly the exact points of difference apparently existing between Mr. Barnardo and Sister Clara, and thus save our readers the trouble of the perusal of the *whole* of it; but since the publication of the letters last week, we have received from Sister Clara a long letter which in every way appears to confute the statements made by Mr. Barnardo in his letter to us, dated August the 23rd.

Mr. Barnardo makes, in the letter alluded to, a distinct and serious accusation against Sister Clara of conspiracy with the Nurses of the staff, to use his own words, "To deprive the Hospital, containing many sick, at one move of its Nursing staff." There is no getting over the fact that Mr. Barnardo has made the charge against one whom he has trusted for at least five years past with the almost absolute control of an important Institution in which he to the outside public acts in a financial capacity; and the charge is one which ought to be met at once, although we consider that the following letters speak for themselves and show to all fair-minded people the utter groundlessness of Mr. Barnardo's reckless statements in this respect.

"Her Majesty's Hospital,
Stepney Causeway, E.,
May 3rd, 1889.

"Sir,—We, the undersigned, having just heard of the accusation which you have brought against our Matron, that she has used her influence to induce us to leave Her Majesty's Hospital, think it only right that you should be informed as to our true reason for doing so.

"We were engaged by Sister Clara, and came here to work under *her*; consequently when we heard of her intended resignation, we immediately sent in ours also—Sister Clara not using her influence in the slightest degree. We have ever entertained the highest respect for Sister Clara and Sister Mary, from both of whom we have always received the greatest kindness and consideration; and of course any slight shown to them we should personally resent.

"We beg to say that this letter has been written *unknown* to Sister Clara.

"MINNIE SINDEN, IRENE OVERBECH,
KATE RIDER, BESSIE BRETHERTON,
LOTTIE RUDKIN, KATE ROBERTS,
GRACE TOMLINSON, HELEN HOLE."

"18 to 26, Stepney Causeway,
London, E.,

6th May, 1889.

"Dr. Barnardo has just received the letter

signed by Miss Sinden and seven other Nurses relative to a supposed 'accusation' brought against Sister Clara.

"The writers of that letter are evidently unacquainted with the facts which Dr. Barnardo now places before them.

"In a letter received from Sister Clara on the 13th or 14th of April, she said, when speaking of her resignation and of certain changes which Dr. Barnardo had proposed to make in the Medical superintendence of the work, 'This intimation will doubtless cause you to defer the re-arrangement of the Hospital until I and *my co-workers* have left.'

"That statement took Dr. Barnardo by surprise. He knew that the Nurses in the Hospital could have no knowledge of what had passed between him and Sister Clara, unless the latter had divulged it—that is, had spoken of her intentions to resign.

"Sister Clara was not only a Nurse, but had been placed in *high trust* as Matron and General Superintendent. Dr. Barnardo had left her almost uncontrolled for years. Such high duties carried with them certain grave responsibilities—such, for example, as that Sister Clara in resigning her work should act, *not* like a mere subordinate or inferior Nurse, and speak generally of her plans to her co-workers, but her obvious duty was, at any rate, to *keep her correspondence with the Director to herself until such time arrived as made it obviously necessary for her in common frankness to acquaint all in the house with the step which she was about to take.*

"This she apparently did *not* do, but as the very letter received from the Nurses this morning abundantly proves, she spoke to her subordinates in the house of her resignation *before she sent it in*, for the letter of the Nurses says, 'When we heard of her *intended* resignation we immediately sent in ours also.'

"The Nurses who have written the letter received by Dr. Barnardo this morning, evidently are *not* aware of what is expected from a *lady* occupying the high and responsible post of Sister Clara, and it was to that fact that Dr. Barnardo referred when, in his letter which reached Sister Clara on Friday last, he used these words, referring to the announcement of Sister Clara that she '*and her co-workers*' were leaving:—

"What am I to think by the sentence itself, except that having in a fit of anger sent in your resignation, you have communicated the fact to all the other persons working in the Hospital *with a view to influence them*, and probably *have influenced them*, to follow your example. How you reconcile such conduct with the great responsibility of your position I do not know.

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