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No. 130.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1890.

VOL. 5.

## Contents.

EDITORIAL.—LONDON HOSPITAL.—VIII. ... ..	145
OBSTETRIC NURSING. BY OBSTETRICA, M.B.N.A....	147
NURSING ECHOES. BY S. G. ... ..	148
WOMEN AND THEIR WORK. BY VEVA KARSLAND	152
POST-CARD EXAMINATIONS ... ..	154
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ... ..	155

## EDITORIAL.

### LONDON HOSPITAL.—VIII.

A STATEMENT which we have made and repeated, in this column, in reference to the London Hospital revelations, is that the Committee of that Institution has given the Matron uncontrolled power. By two valued correspondents this assertion has been called in question. One writes:—"I am sure you must be quite mistaken. I have been a Governor of the London Hospital for many years, and cannot believe that the Committee would permit themselves and their Hospital to be under petticoat government. Certainly they would never allow one servant to tyrannise over others." The other thinks that we "have not realised the necessity which exists in a great place like the London Hospital of maintaining discipline, and the difficulty of doing so when some two hundred and forty women are concerned, unless considerable authority is given to the Matron." We welcome this plain speaking, although neither of the writers will do us the favour of permitting a signed and complete letter from their pens to appear in these columns. It is quite possible that the same arguments may have occurred to others amongst our readers, and therefore it will be well briefly to examine and to try them. We are especially glad to do this, inasmuch as,

although we have received many most important letters from past London Hospital Nurses, nearly without exception ladies who now hold good positions in the Nursing profession, we have not received one single letter for publication controverting, or even attempting to disprove, one single fact or statement which we have advanced.

In reply, however, to the first criticism, we cannot refrain from telling what we have heard upon good authority, that at a meeting of the House Committee, held no longer than a year ago, one of its best known members told his colleagues that it was openly said of them in Whitechapel that they were all "under petticoat government." We have given our correspondent the name of the speaker, and doubt not that he will be surprised to find that "Whitechapel" holds views entirely diverse from his own. Far be it from us to object to this form of government in the abstract. History abounds with instances in which it has been eminently honourable, successful, and just, but only where it was legalised; and we go so far as to think that our critic would join with us in praising "petticoat government" in such a case. We take it that he means, what we mean, that authority which is not legal—power which is, in short, usurped from the halting hands of ruled rulers—is unjustifiable and wrong. But the question which the public will ask the Committee of the London Hospital is not whether this form of control is contemptible or not, but whether this particular Institution is governed according to the Bye-Laws and the Standing Orders for that special purpose made and provided. And we declare, on the strength of evidence recently given upon oath before the Select Committee of the House of Lords—and to which we more especially refer our correspondent—that the Committee has deliberately disregarded that very constitution

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)