

riculum of Training will abolish in the near future from the Nursing Army, as wisely suggested by Nurse Mackin seventeen years ago.

Yours,
"A LOVER OF JUSTICE."

ST. OLAVE'S INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I am very glad indeed that you have been dealing with the troubles that have arisen in connection with St. Olave's Infirmary. I am a ratepayer—to a considerable extent—in Rotherhithe, and as I derive my income from the parish I think it only right to make myself acquainted with its affairs and, if needs be, to fight for its best interests. I have no hesitancy in saying that a large percentage of the present Board of Guardians are not likely to serve the best interests of the parish, and my regret at the election of such persons to fulfil the functions of "Guardians" of the Poor is shared by a large section of the respectable community of Rotherhithe.

For my own part I feel that an important factor in the civilisation of such Boards consists in the presence on it of a balancing party of women. On the previous Board we had two women, and I believe they were a valuable support to Miss Evans in the reforms she has instituted at the Infirmary. Were some ladies on the Board I think the Guardians would hardly indulge in the abusive language and the unseemly behaviour which characterise the Committee meetings. And, moreover, they would conduct themselves in a more suitable manner in the wards of the Infirmary were they under the eye of independent feminine criticism. There are some curious stories current in Rotherhithe as to the "attentions" which several of the Guardians have attempted to force on the Infirmary Nurses, and it has been reported that two of these gentlemen were ordered out of the building by the Medical Superintendent at 11.30 one night. They had ensconced themselves in one of the small sitting rooms provided near the wards for the Nurses on duty, and here they were smoking their pipes and making constant remarks to the nursing staff until their impertinence was cut short by the action of the Medical Superintendent. And there are also well-authenticated rumours that several of the Guardians insist on taking tea with the Nurses, and these dignified members of the Board are known in Rotherhithe as the "tea and muffin" Guardians. The Nurses, of course, are helpless against their employers. Were they to offer the objections they would wish to offer, no doubt their tenure of office at the Infirmary would very shortly come to an end. We who live at the gates of the Infirmary are well aware for what reasons some of the Guardians wish to dismiss the ladylike and educated Nurses whom Miss Evans has introduced, and why they say "let the whole twenty-four go." They are anxious for a lower grade of Nurse to take the place of these ladies, and we can quite foresee the condition of affairs which may follow if they succeed in this.

Many residents of Rotherhithe are hoping that a Government enquiry will be instituted—in which case I think very few of the present Board would find themselves re-elected. I enclose my card, and beg to sign myself

"INDIGNANT."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—There is little doubt that you have exposed a fallacy in your Editorial of last week. The position adopted by the Chairman and Guardians of the St. Olave's Infirmary is an absolutely untenable one. To assert that a senior official, the Matron of a Poor Law Infirmary, has no right to express an opinion according to her conscience, is to assume that the Matron is the paid, personal, servant of the Guardians and not a *public official*, who is responsible to the ratepayers. These gentlemen arrogate to themselves an absolute autocracy, to which they have not a shadow of right, being them-

selves merely the trustees of the ratepayers, and by no means independent individuals. It is to be sincerely regretted that there are no women on the Board at Rotherhithe; liberty of conscience would not then be denied to the Matron of the Institution.

"A WOMAN GUARDIAN."

"TIGHT LACING AND TEA."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Personally I think a vast amount of nonsense is talked and written about tight lacing and tea. No woman over five-and-twenty looks decent without stays, and the notion of a whole Nursing school, flabby and waistless, means that half the Nurses would present the appearance of a sack of beans tied round the middle. I have been a Nurse ten years, I have always "worn a waist," I mean to have one to the bitter end, and I drink tea five times a day. Neither of these "terrors" have produced indigestion, even in conjunction with foreign meat and the general Hospital *cuisine*.

Yours,
"A WASP."

STREET CRIES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I am very glad that Dr. Corbyn has taken up the question of the "London Street Cries." It certainly seems that physicians and Nurses should combine in a protest against the sounds which make both the night and the day hideous to the sick under our care. Hospital patients, as a rule, are not so much affected by the multifarious shouts and yells which each year are making London a more uncomfortable city to live in; because, not only do they come from the ranks of those to whom quiet is an absolutely unthought-of luxury, but Hospital buildings are usually set back somewhat from the noise of pavement and thoroughfare. I am really speaking on behalf of the invalid at home and in private Nursing Homes. To them the noises of the streets constitute a purgatory worse than any Dante dreamt of in his Inferno. It is some time since I read my Dante, and I may be wrong, but I fancy he did not include "noise" in his "tortures for the damned." Now, I would class it almost in the first ranks of excruciating torture.

In the early morning in our streets there is the heavy wagon traffic, then comes the milk and the watercresses, and the thousand and one sounds by which the great city shakes off its slumber and begins another day of toil. And these sounds go on in their intensity all day long, until the weary invalid almost prays for the last long sleep, as affording the only available means of quiet.

And then on Sunday, when commerce does not require the sacrifice of our nervous systems, the same rowdiness and noise prevails. The horror of the Sunday editions—it is true they are not heralded by that monotonous cry of "All the winners," which is so resolutely shouted through our streets on week-days—but the sound is just as bad. And then the church-bells with their interminable peals, which might be rung for five minutes instead of half-an-hour, and then the Salvation Armyists, not to count the sounds of revelry on all hands which announce to us that 'Arry and 'Arriet are abroad in all their rowdiness.

The remedy lies partly in legislation, partly in social reform. So long as no kind of occupation and resource of an interesting kind is provided for our "teeming millions," so long will they continue to rowdy about the streets. Open museums and picture galleries, make beautiful music for them in our parks, provide them with wholesome reading in comfortable public libraries—in a word, give them an outlet and they will not spend their Sundays, or week-days either, in shouting in the streets. There should be a "Street Noise Commission" appointed in order to decide what is and what is not permissible. Some decision might be arrived at which would benefit the healthy and sick alike. When I am doing private

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