

communicated with, and that she should be severely reprimanded for bringing discredit on the honourable cloth she wears.

Sincerely yours,  
A NURSE WITH A SENSE OF PROPRIETY.

### REGISTRATION OF PLUMBERS—OR NURSES?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I have been waiting for someone more skilled than myself in the use of the pen, to call attention to the Bill which has now been introduced into the House of Commons, which will make the Registration of Plumbers compulsory. It is regarded as a matter of national importance that the men who carry out the details of our sanitation should be properly qualified; since it is in their hands, to a great extent, to make or mar the health of the people who live in the houses "plumbed" by them.

The object of the Bill is to make it illegal for an unauthorised plumber to call himself a registered plumber—apparently a very small thing, but involving a great deal. For years past there has been going on in this country a great national movement for the improvement of the plumbing trade. Plumbers have been examined in their craft, and when found efficient have had their names inscribed upon a register. But as anybody can at present call himself a registered plumber without incurring any punishment for fraud, this registration has not proved much of a safeguard.

Now, Madam, this is exactly the position in which we Nurses are placed. We have a Register, on which we place our names, but unless this registration leads up to State Registration it is of absolutely no value. The public are beginning to realise that they must protect themselves from the sins, negligences and ignorances of registered and non-registered plumbers. But they are slow in waking up to the fact that they need still more to be protected from inefficient and "quack" Nurses.

One of our leading and progressive newspapers says, in speaking of the Plumbers' Registration Bill, "that a safeguard is needed is obvious. Doctors are not allowed to call themselves members of the Royal College of Physicians unless they really belong to that body, and the plumbing trade is quite as important to the national health as the medical profession."

But the natural sequence that Nurses as well as doctors need to be registered, does not seem to occur to the editorial mind. No doubt the mischievous policy of the Royal British Nurses' Association in offering a determined opposition to State Registration, will throw dust in the eyes of the public for a short time, but I doubt if the public will be so foolish as to insist on a registered *plumber*, at the same time that they are availing themselves of the services of an unregistered Nurse. It is too obviously ridiculous and illogical. Therefore it will be a great advantage to the Nurses for this Bill to be passed. The same newspaper just quoted continues: "It is repugnant to the English spirit to establish monopolies. By enabling plumbers to register, a householder would know where to obtain a good plumber when he wanted one, and it is proposed that any registered plumber convicted of bad work shall be struck off the Register. Here is a great incentive to technical education. Of course, the jerry builder and all the brood who batten on the misery of the working man, are opposed to

anything that is likely to put an end to their present irresponsible state. Nevertheless let us hope that the Bill will become law. One of its immediate consequences will be to make the plumber take a pride in his work, to prevent tinkers, painters, and carpenters from calling themselves plumbers, and thus to revive a moribund trade, upon the honesty of which our lives very largely depend."

Now in this we have an exact parallel to the case of the Nurses. In fact, if we were to substitute the word "Nurse" for plumber, we should have an admirable statement of the case from the Nurse's point of view. "The jerry builder and all the brood who batten on the misery of the working man" represent the Nurse-sweaters of Institutions and Hospitals who send out one or two years' Nurses to private cases, and at the same time batten and fatten on their earnings. And in the "tinkers, painters, and carpenters who call themselves plumbers," we have represented the large army of women who take a six months' course at an infirmary and some lectures, then promptly don a uniform and call themselves Nurses—to the great detriment of *bona-fide* honourable women who have thoroughly qualified—and also to the great detriment of the confiding, easily-gulled British public; who think that the wearing of a uniform is an assurance of proficiency.

I hope my letter is not too long. But it seemed to me that this Bill has so important a bearing on the question of Nurses that it ought to be dwelt upon at some length.

KATHLEEN REDMOND.

Dublin.

## Comments and Replies.

### REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Nurse Brett.*—An admirable ice-pick is made from a strong darning-needle with a knob of sealing-wax at the eye, which forms a handle and gives you more hold. It also prevents any possible accident to your own hand.

*Mrs. Marshall.*—Of course you have a perfect right to send one of your servants to a Hospital. And as you remark, "She is of the class for whom Hospitals are intended." But you must not be surprised or hurt at the criticism from your friends on the subject. It appears to us, as she had been your parlourmaid for ten years, and as you say, "a valued servant"—that you might have done more for her. And as your circumstances are so good, we quite agree with the "gossip" of whom you complain, that you might have sent some sort of donation to the Hospital which took in, treated and sheltered your "valued servant" until she was well enough to render you the services you so much appreciate.

*Cosmopolitan.*—With regard to your defence of the Chelsea Nurses, who are reported to have been influenced to oppose the election of a medical woman as officer in the Infirmary, we think you are taking quite a wrong view of the matter. Any expression of opinion as to the appointment of officials must be subversive of discipline. What would be thought of a regiment of soldiers which presumed to dictate to the War Office in the selection of a colonel to command them?

*C. J. N. Todd.*—We are sorry we cannot give you any information with regard to the books you ask for on "The structure and use of Thermometers," and "the signs and terms commonly used in prescriptions." We do not know of any text-books dealing *separately* with these subjects.

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