

Nursing Politics.

AN OFFENSIVE THREAT.

THE last number of the *Nurses' Journal* is so full of "points" that it will afford food for criticism for some time to come.

LAST week we took exception to the offensive announcement, made to the members by the new Editorial Committee, that the letters of the members would be "suppressed" in their own Journal. The printed threat alone is new, as it has been the custom for some time past, by those responsible for the conduct of our Journal, to make personal attacks upon those members who had the courage to openly disapprove of the mismanagement of the Association, and to "suppress" their replies. We are by no means surprised, therefore, that the present Editorial Committee—Drs. Coupland, Wethered, and Mr. Fardon of Middlesex Hospital, Dr. Bezly Thorne and Miss Helen Foggo-Thompson—have openly declared their intention of pursuing this reprehensible policy, but it remains to be seen how long the members will consent to be "gagged" by this little clique. Outsiders watched with interest the fight for free expression of opinion by the members of the British Medical Association in their own official organ—an indisputable right which they have won to the benefit of all concerned, and medical men will not expect the nurse members of the Royal British Nurses' Association to quietly submit to reprehensible and repressive methods to which they will not submit themselves. If any attempt is made to "suppress" free criticism of their own affairs in their own official organ, there is no doubt that those who attempt to enforce such a system will be overwhelmed by the odium they justly deserve.

WE are warned that "no personalities" will be permitted in the *Nurses' Journal* for the future—and we hope this is true—as all personal attacks have been made by those responsible for the conduct of the Journal, upon members, who have been denied the right to reply.

IN our own case, Mr. Brudenell Carter was permitted to make a virulent attack upon us in the *Nurses' Journal*, in his proverbial style, in which he made various untrue statements, and our letter of reply was excluded on the pretence that it was of "a personal nature." Of course it was of a personal nature, and refuted, root and branch, the vicious personal attack—admitted from Mr. Carter—by those responsible for the issue of the Journal.

A QUOTATION would be amusing, just to prove the dangers of "suppression." In the editorial

in the *Nurses' Journal*, written by Mr. Brudenell Carter in February, 1894, we find the following paragraph in relation to the formation of the Registered Nurses' Society: "The initiation in this, as in so many other good works, has been taken by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, at whose instigation the members of the Executive Committee of the Association, and the members of the Registration Board, were invited to meet together on January 30th, in order to discuss her proposal that a Co-operative Society of Registered Nurses should be affiliated to the Association."

MR. BRUDENELL CARTER'S personal attack on us appeared in the *Nurses' Journal* for March, 1896, in which he is careful to say, "I have no controversy with Mrs. Fenwick," and in which, in support of Miss Etta Jackson's method of forming the Chartered Nurses' Society, he quotes as follows from the NURSING RECORD:—"It may be within the memory of our readers that in April, 1894, upon our suggestion that Registered Nurses should be afforded some direct means of obtaining private nursing work a co-operation of Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association was formed under the title of the Registered Nurses' Society. The scheme met with opposition, as usual, from certain medical members of the Executive Committee, but ultimately some others joined the Committee of the new Society." Mr. Carter continues, "I have italicised two passages in the foregoing extract, both of which I should describe as inaccurate. With regard to the first of them, so far as it having been 'our' suggestion, that the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association should be assisted to obtain private work, the suggestion was made, I believe, by myself"!! Fortunately, what is written, stands—and we imagine that Mr. Brudenell Carter had forgotten his editorial of 1894, when he penned his personal and untruthful attack in 1896.

THE truth is, in the interim, we incurred Mr. Carter's bitter animus because we felt it our duty to oppose his proposal (without due notice appearing on the agenda) that his own step-daughter should be appointed to a paid post in the office of the Royal British Nurses' Association, as we and other matrons considered there were material objections to such an appointment!

WE pointed out these salient facts in our reply to Mr. Brudenell Carter's attack, and in consequence our letter was pronounced "of a personal nature," and was "suppressed" by Dr. Coupland, Mr. Fardon, Mr. Langton and Miss de Pledge.

WE have dealt with this deplorable method of conducting our official journal at some length, because under such a system the character and good name of no member is safe, and we would

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