

training of Nurses for Workhouse Infirmaries of a uniform nature throughout the kingdom.

I fully expect, and sincerely hope, this letter will be criticised, but if it will in any way help forward the systematic and thorough training of Nurses for this class of work I shall be satisfied, as I think none others should be employed.

As showing its need, I have before me an advertisement for a nurse for a workhouse in this same county, and not a word is said about her training or knowledge required, except that "no person can be appointed who is unable to read written directions upon medicines," (?) and also that applicants "state their previous occupation."

I am, etc.,  
 E. STEER,  
 Chairman of Visiting Committee,  
 East Grinstead Union.

[Our correspondent is entirely correct in his estimate of the great importance of this matter.—ED.]

#### SUPPRESSING THE MATRONS.

*To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—With all due deference to your elling head lines, and I own they are apt—it is quite useless for Mr. Fardon and the Hon. Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association, to attempt to suppress the Matrons. Hospitals in which the Matron is ignored merely gain for themselves a reputation for bad nursing discipline, and in consequence bad management; and the honest work done by the large majority of our Matrons, have established them in a position of trust and co-operation with the workers in the other departments of a hospital. Most Chairmen and Committees treat the Matron with every mark of confidence and respect, and the Medical Staff are also warmly appreciative of the result of her devotion to duty. This being the case, is it not quite natural that the Sisters and Nurses in every well disciplined hospital should rely upon their Matron for advice and help, and give her their loyal support?

This is the situation in most hospitals, and Mr. Fardon will not find it easy to sow dissension between Matrons and Nurses, even by the outrageous bribe of placing them on an equality with their superior officers on the new Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association. That a few Sisters, under the personal control of Mr. Fardon and his colleagues, have been prompted and persuaded to attend the disgraceful Meetings of this Association, and *vote against their own Matrons*—depriving them of the *ex-officio* seats which good faith and gratitude alone would have accorded them—is shameful, I own; but the Matron who for the future places any reliance in the promises, or even the Bye-Laws of the R.B.N.A., must be a neophyte indeed. Self preservation is the first instinct of life, and no Matron with a grain of sense or spirit will place herself at the mercy of the Hon. Officers or their dependent nurses, by joining the R.B.N.A. Mr. Fardon's latest insult, in relation to our "morals," will no doubt give the *coup-de-grace* to his tyranny over us. In this connection, one is prompted to ask what unfortunate experiences are those of Mr. Fardon, that he is so sceptical in relation to the morality of hospital Matrons?

Yours truly,  
 MORALIST.

#### STEADFAST AND TRUE.

*To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—The letters of Miss Rosina Graham, and Miss Lillie Waddington published in last week's NURSING RECORD, opened a subject which many of us are wishing to have ventilated, but, which we have all been waiting for one another to begin, or indeed, for some indication from yourself as to the course which should be pursued at the present crisis. Many of us have remained members of the Royal British Nurses' Association for some time past simply because you advised it, and also because so long as our original Bye Laws were in force we had rights and privileges to defend, but now there is nothing left to us to care for. And it appears to me that, with sorrow for the condition in which the evil counsels of a few, and the culpable pliability of a section of the nurse members have landed us, but with a feeling of unmitigated relief, we can now wash our hands of a most disagreeable duty, and turn our minds to furthering the objects for which we were originally associated. How this may best be accomplished we naturally turn to you to know. We followed you, many of us, when you founded the British Nurses' Association, because we knew that anything inspired by you would be for the good of the nursing profession; we knew also of your capacity for hard work, your genius for organization; and our knowledge of the splendid work which you had already accomplished, drew many of us to the ranks of the new Association. The difficulties which have arisen in the Association, however, and the means by which we have been deprived of the liberties which were granted to us under the Charter and Bye-Laws of '93, were difficulties which it was impossible for anyone so generously minded as yourself to foresee. The issues involved were also, perhaps, deeper than anyone quite realized, and at the end of 10 years' experience, I think we must admit that it is impossible to associate employers and employed in managing an Association with any hope of independence for the latter. The forces brought to bear upon them are too strong, and they go under.

I call to mind, however, the remarks which fell from your lips at the first Annual Meeting of the Association, held in the Guildhall at Cambridge.—"I think we must ask ourselves—Are our principles founded on truth and justice, and our intentions pure? And if we can answer this conscientiously in the affirmative, then we have nothing to fear; and, what is more, we are certain of success. We have nailed our colours to the mast, and there, while we quietly and steadfastly pursue the course we have marked out for ourselves, we must let them wave." The colours in your hands are still waving, and to you we turn for guidance as to the next step. To whom else, indeed, should we look? Sore beset, hard pressed, and insulted, through good and evil report, you have carried the colours aloft, and you may, I am sure, rest assured, that those who follow your lead in a new organization will bring with them not only the trust in you with which they were inspired ten years ago, but that they will also be imbued with the deepest admiration for the heroic way in which you have contended, often single-handed, for the liberties of nurses; and that they will be even prouder of your leadership than was possible in the days of success and prosperity.

I am, Dear Madam, most gratefully Yours,  
 MARGARET BREAY.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)