

the work for which the Association was principally founded, and the Bill which the Association has caused to be drafted and brought before Parliament for the Registration of Nurses. This meeting considers that such opposition is not consistent with the duty of officers, and, therefore, calls upon them to resign the membership of the Association."

THE ENCYCLICAL FROM THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—The "Annual Letter" which the Matron of the London Hospital publishes and sends to nurses who have trained, and who are training, at that hospital is clearly meant for private circulation only. It is sent to old workers who desire to keep in touch with their training-school, and the Matron naturally—often by request—takes this opportunity of giving to those nurses her views on many important matters connected with nursing, as well as giving them such news of their Alma Mater as she thinks will be of interest to them. This letter is eagerly looked for in the spring of each year, and is greatly appreciated by a very large majority of old workers, and I, for one, consider it a breach of faith on the part of your correspondent signing herself "One Who Has Worked at the London" to send extracts from such a letter for publication in a newspaper.

Surely any Matron, Sister, or nurse has a perfect right to state her views on the Registration question in the way that is most convenient to her, and to use her influence, be it great or small, for or against Registration according to her convictions.

Miss Lütkes is charged by your correspondent with "attempting to influence nurses ignorant of the question," and this, she says, is unjust and unfair. But why? And why, may I ask, are these nurses ignorant of the question? They are not children, and enough has been written on the subject to make it quite possible for them to have become familiar with it, if they chose to take the trouble.

Above all, let there be fairness, with freedom of thought and of action; and let this question of State Registration for Nurses be fought on its merits, avoiding, as far as possible, personalities.

I am, dear Madam,

Your sincerely,

ONE WHO IS PROUD OF HAVING WORKED
AT THE LONDON FOR MANY YEARS.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—As an "old worker from the London," I would ask if it is a necessary part of this campaign to use the "Matron's annual letter," which is, and has been for many years, issued to present and past workers of the hospital, as a peg whereon to hang certain observations? The letter—an Encyclical you call it—is printed for private circulation only. It would strike one that the Matron of the London, or any other hospital, when sending out such a letter, was quite within her right to make any observations she chose upon any nursing question, either for or against. Let us as women workers be fair all round, and observe the ordinary code of honour which is in force amongst the workers of the other sex. There is quite enough harm done in the entire sphere of women's

work by injudicious enthusiasts, without nurses conducting their warfare on other than the most above-ground lines. May I be permitted to mention one question in connection with the subject of State Registration which I have not seen dealt with yet—and although I happen to be an old Londoner, and, therefore, presumably ignorant, I have followed the question with some attention. It is this: Whereas the medical man, who is taken as an example when quoting the good Registration has done in other cases, finds that age brings him not only greater professional skill but greater public confidence by every decade he adds to it, age is not a thing whose decades add to a nurse's well-being after the first few years of her nursing life are spent. There must come a time when this question will prove an all-absorbing one; trained nursing has not been quite long enough a factor in the labour market for it as yet to be vital, though it is approaching a time which Registration will probably hasten.

Yours truly,

C. A. F.

[The printed Encyclical sent out by the Matron of the London Hospital to which our correspondents refer can hardly be considered a private and confidential document, as it is issued by a public official—it is rumoured at the public expense—to persons outside her jurisdiction; and that in the present instance it has aroused adverse criticism upon the part of some of the recipients and their friends cannot surprise any unprejudiced person who reads it.

We quite agree with the correspondent who desires that there should "be fairness, with freedom of thought and action," in discussing State Registration of Nurses, but this line has not been adopted at the London Hospital, where the all-powerful officials have made their views on the question known to their subordinates in no uncertain manner, and, as far as we know, have given them no opportunity of listening to arguments on the other side before inviting them to sign against their own professional enfranchisement and that of their fellow nurses.

The unreasoning opposition of the Matron of the London Hospital to all co-operation amongst trained nurses for their own welfare and the organisation of the nursing profession by State Registration is a matter of history, and has aroused excusable indignation amongst nurses who are not under her control. They argue, quite fairly, that as Registration when it comes (and it won't be long) will not be compulsory, and as no nurse need register unless she chooses, there is nothing to prevent Miss Lütkes, and those dependent upon her patronage, continuing to rank themselves with the semi-trained, untrained, and criminal persons who now compete on equal terms with the certificated nurses from the London Hospital in the open market. But they also argue that those nurses who desire honourable legal status, and who wish to rank professionally with their enlightened colleagues in the Colonies and the United States, should have equal liberty to do as they choose, and be able to dissociate themselves from unskilled and often disreputable women posing as nurses. This is what we should consider "fairness with freedom of thought and action."

We think the less said about "the ordinary code of honour" in connection with this document, which is a tissue of innuendo, the better.—ED.]

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