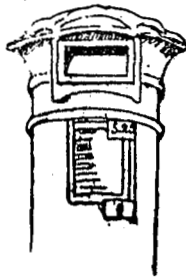


as manufacturers of most excellent spectacles at a price which has hitherto never been attempted in this country for really first class glasses. It is unnecessary to point out to Nurses that spectacles or folders are valuable not only in the assistance of vision but in the preservation of the eyesight; so that if there be any imperfection in eye power it is undoubtedly wise to use glasses; while, in that event, it is essential that the glasses should be not only precisely suitable, but also of excellent quality. All these requisites are to be obtained, and at remarkably small cost, from the Company to which we have referred, whose central offices are 65 and 66, Chancery Lane, W.C., from which all further information can be obtained.



## Letters to the Editor.

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

*Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.*

### OFFICIOUS OR OFFICIAL?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—The best homage to success is said to be the flattery of imitation; the best proof of success is, as a rule, the sooner or later collapse of the imitation.

Some such thoughts as these ran through my mind when reading a document sent for my perusal, apparently based upon the widest principles of philanthropy, for it gave an assurance in the near future of opening up, absolutely "free of charge" a Promised Land overflowing with milk and honey, to the disconsolate incapables who yearly swell the numbers, and weaken the force of the Nursing ranks.

My readers will naturally be palpitating with joyous anticipation to learn how a scheme so enchanting can be brought within the limits of mundane fulfilment. I fear they may experience a slight chill of disappointment, a sort of brushing away of the bloom upon the ripened peach of hope, when I tell them, *sotto voce*, that the spell that is to work the charm is a—Directory! The wizard who is to wield this new found wand of divination, and guide the helpless and forlorn to the realms of bliss (Nursing), "leading to better worlds than ours," is the Director of the Directorate! Nor is the gifted seer alone in his wide-reaching schemes of benevolence, for he is to have the support of a small (and doubtless devoted) band of medical men and matrons, whose mysterious identities are at present veiled from the public gaze, but a glimpse of their principles is revealed to us, and from this fitful gleam of light, we discern that so wide is their spirit of catholicity, so completely are they free from the ignoble trammels of a narrow conventionalism that they do *not* believe that a rigid uniformity of curriculum and period of training can as yet be enforced by those eager throngs (Nurses) who are awaiting with breathless expectation the opening of that Portal of Hope, the "official" front door of Mr. H. C. Burdett, 428, Strand, London, W.C.

There is a laughable side to everything; our Nurses are for the most part young, and hence their judgment is immature, but we may surely hope they are not so dull of perception as to be unable to discern the difference between leaders and mis-leaders, and to prefer a free ticket to "Nowhere" to an honoured passport that will stand them in good stead all over the world.

The mischiefs of mis-leading are not confined to the members of the Nursing profession—and they can be kept in check there. They concern far more closely our sick countrymen and women, to whom real or "sham" Nursing may make the difference between life and death. It is one of the chief objects of the Royal British Nurses' Association to guard the public against this insidious danger.

A great literary genius, whose wide scholarship embraced the whole range of ancient and modern literature, once exposed with merciless force the blatant pretensions of a much lauded "sham" poet of the period, and at once illustrated and enforced his denunciations by a fable of Pilpay, that appears to my mind singularly apposite to the matter we have just been discussing, and, with the Editor's permission, I will quote the renowned narrative of the brilliant essayist.

"A pious Brahmin, it is written, made a vow that on a certain day he would sacrifice a sheep, and on the appointed morning he went forth to buy one. There lived in his neighbourhood three rogues who knew of his vow and laid a scheme for profiting by it. The first met him and said, 'O Brahmin, wilt thou buy a sheep? I have one fit for sacrifice.' 'It is for that very purpose,' said the holy man, 'that I came forth this day.' Then the impostor opened a bag, and brought out of it an unclean beast, an ugly dog, lame and blind. Thereon the Brahmin cried out, 'Wretch, who touchest things impure, and utterest things untrue, callest thou that cur a sheep?' 'Truly,' answered the other, 'it is a sheep of the finest fleece, and of the sweetest flesh. O Brahmin, it will be an offering most acceptable to the gods.' 'Friend,' said the Brahmin, 'either thou or I must be blind.'

"Just then one of the accomplices came up. 'Praised be the gods,' said the second rogue, 'that I have been saved the trouble of going to the market for a sheep! This is such a sheep as I wanted. For how much wilt thou sell it?' When the Brahmin heard this, his mind wavered to and fro, like one swinging in the air at a holy festival. 'Sir,' said he to the newcomer, 'take heed what thou dost, this is no sheep, but an unclean cur.' 'O Brahmin,' said the newcomer, 'thou art drunk or mad!'

"At this time the third confederate drew near. 'Let us ask this man,' said the Brahmin, 'what the creature is, and I will stand by what he shall say.' To this the others agreed, and the Brahmin called out, 'O, stranger, what dost thou call this beast?' 'Surely, O Brahmin,' said the knave, 'it is a fine sheep.' Then said the Brahmin, 'Surely the gods have taken away my senses; and he asked pardon of him who carried the dog, and bought it for a measure of rice and a pot of ghee, and offered it up to the gods, who, being wroth at this unclean sacrifice, smote him with a sore disease in all his joints.'

Yours truly,

A SYMPATHISER WITH THE PIOUS BRAHMIN.

### SELF-HELP.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—Among all the letters appearing in your welcome little paper, the NURSING RECORD, anent our behaviour, our uniform, our character, &c., &c., it has for some time been a surprise to me that no mention has yet been made of what others besides myself must surely feel the need of—the formation of a sick fund in connection with the Royal British Nurses' Association. From a recent report of this, our Association, I see that various sick members have been helped from the funds. But it seems to me that we do

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)