

DEAR MADAM,—I have a great opinion of people minding their own affairs. If, as I understand from your columns, Mr. Burdett is engaged on the Stock Exchange, surely he can find there sufficient, and more than sufficient, scope for his superabundant energies without taking upon himself the delicate and arduous task of issuing a Nursing Directory—and official too.

Now, in the course of my life—I won't confess to being more than 60—I have had some varied experience of Nurses, and feel proportionately interested in their heroic efforts to emerge from the dark ages of incompetency and establish themselves as a profession. I remember, many years ago, one woman called a Nurse by the Doctor—can I ever forget her! To my delirious imagination she was six feet two if an inch, and still growing; she did nothing but watch with lips pursed, and hands folded, as if I was the mouse and she the cat, waiting to make a deadly spring. She could not even read, and just "remembered" which bottle contained poison, and which not. Far different was my recent experience. A Nurse, bright as a lark, whose very presence seemed like a breath of mountain air, or a strong sunbeam, whose every movement had an object, whose touch was a science.

This suggestion of Mr. Burdett's Directory is to me like the shadow of a nightmare. In it numberless thousands of women, untrained, but bearing the courtesy title "Nurse" may be given a new lease of life, to prowl about the country seeking whom they may devour. In mercy preserve me from them!

I doubt not these semi-trained women will hail Mr. Burdett as one who offers salvation on easy terms, and thus will take advantage of this opportunity to slip in and have a good time. But the game will be up if those qualified refuse to be a party to shielding them. I have just taken down Nuttall, and find "official" means "from the proper authority." Does Mr. Burdett wish it to be understood that he is the proper authority to issue to the innocent unsuspecting public a budget of the Nursing profession? A new burden will be added to life if the words of the Queen's English have to be *officially* protected from misuse official! Perhaps Mr. Burdett would kindly explain what he understands by "official." If I go to the theatre I am warned against purchasing unauthorised copies of the words sold outside; if I go to the British Museum I am warned that the Official Guide can only be purchased within the gates. Equally it is the duty, then, of every Matron and *bona-fide* Nurse throughout the Kingdom to warn her subordinates against lending, by the appearance of their name in the Official (*sic*) Nursing Directory, a reflected prestige to incompetent women.

Yours, &c.,

CHARLES HOGARTH.

2nd April, 1895.

THE MODERN TRAINED NURSE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I think that the opinions expressed last week by a "Registered Nurse" concerning the last Sessional Lecture at the Royal British Nurses' Association were shared by a large majority of the members present. We did not so much mind the statement that unless married we must inevitably develop into "soured old maids," because that is a harmless delusion upon the part of the superior sex, at which happy, independent working women can afford to be amused, but the whole tone of Sir Dyce Duckworth's address was depressing, and the text unreal and belonging to a bygone age, and were we members of the Royal British Nurses' Association to be influenced by it, our Association would soon cease to exist. The mainspring of the action of the Modern Trained Nurse is a strong sense of professional duty, and the result of that sense has been the organisation of our Chartered Association of Nurses, and no depreciatory douches will have the effect of damping for long the ardour which has already accomplished so much under most disheartening circumstances. Why? Because women in all grades of life are awaking from the inertia of centuries, and that awakening means that we must claim a right to perform our duty according to the dictates of that

conscience planted within us by God—a conscience founded on the great fundamental laws of justice. We Nurses are only an infinitesimal portion of the great body politic, but our professional conscience is alert, and that conscience dictates that we should be "true and just in all our dealings." How much is comprised in these two little words for Nurses—"true and just." To the Matron these little words direct that she shall make sure that the Probationers under her care shall be carefully trained, morally, practically, theoretically. She it is that must labour and discriminate so that each Probationer who enters the school over which she presides is of the highest type of womanhood which she can procure, and that the laws and rules which regulate their control shall be founded on equity; she will see that the term of training is sufficient, and the quality of the instruction of the best; and she will not hesitate to represent to her Committee any breach of fair dealing which may have crept in, in the past, such as the autocratic power of discharge of such Probationers, or the pernicious custom of utilising their unskilled labour for cash, thus to increase the income of the hospital. She will encourage her Probationers, by example, to be in sympathy with the grief of the world, not only in sickness but in all those manifold phases of human existence, where misery grips humanity by the vitals, and she will teach them that to effectually deal with physical sickness they must grasp the significance of mental anxiety, and the consequent nerve tension. She will respect the individuality of her subordinates, and teach them the value of self-training and control, and instil into them the value of self-reliance and self-respect, professional *esprit-de-corps*, and professional ambition; she will, in fact, pursue a course of education which will produce noble women, not machines, women who will be fitted to occupy any position in life with advantage to their generation, even if they are called upon to sit in the House of Commons—or marry.

I am, yours truly,

"A MEMBER OF THE MATRONS' COUNCIL."

THE MIDWIVES' BILL.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—You are in error in stating (NURSING RECORD, March 23rd, 1895, page 181), that the draft Midwives' Bill published by you in the same number "has been prepared and is issued by the Midwives' Registration Association." It is based on the "suggested scheme" of the Association, but was drawn up and issued by a representative Committee composed of representatives of medical societies, training schools, and other persons interested in the matter.

Yours truly,

F. R. HUMPHREYS.

March 27th, 1895.

[We are not surprised that Mr. F. R. Humphreys, Hon. Secretary of the Midwives' Registration Association, is anxious to disavow any direct connection between that Association and the draft Midwives' Bill which he issued to the press and which has already received such destructive criticism. We thank Mr. Humphreys for his verbal correction, although as he states that the Bill is "based on the suggested scheme of the Midwives' Registration Association," the alteration in terms appears to involve a very minute distinction.—Ed.]

Comments and Replies.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Miss Annie Baker, London.—We should advise you to call upon the ladies in charge of the following Residential Homes for Nurses, from whom you can obtain terms: 3, Colosseum Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.; 75, Oxford Terrace, Hyde Park, W.; 25, Norfolk Crescent, Hyde Park, W. It costs about 25s. a week to have a single bedroom in a comfortable Home.

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