

the acquaintance of any of "the country folk who have discovered their total ignorance."

It is a matter of common knowledge that the best practical Nurse in the world may be one of the worst teachers, and that unlimited Hospital training, without certain other essential qualifications, would be of comparatively little value to one whose object is—not to nurse, but to teach ignorant persons, in a clear and engaging manner, what to do in the ordinary cases of sickness which may come under their care. As Miss de Pledge rightly pointed out, it is never for a moment contended that those ladies were qualifying as Nurses, but for the work for which they were intended (and carefully chosen), the training—part of which consisted in experience gained in the wards of an Infirmary under a trained Matron, and which included, for those who requested it, experience in night Nursing also—was found more fitting than that which might have been afforded by, even, a rather longer period spent in a Hospital.

This has been proved by one who has tried both ways, and who, desirous to qualify for similar work, found that she obtained most benefit when studying under the conditions mentioned. Judging by results (the best of all tests) the system has been entirely successful in producing a staff of competent County Council teachers, who have richly deserved the credit which their excellent work has gained for them, and for the institution under whose auspices they have laboured.

By all means let everyone have as much knowledge of her work as possible, there cannot be too much. But when insisting upon the fact that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" it is as well to set a good example in the matter. Is it too much to suggest, in all humility, that the writer of the review, even when the work upon which she was at the moment engaged was the simple one of criticising other people's labour, and making loose assertions concerning them for which no proof can be produced, might perhaps have been at the pains to obtain "the little knowledge" requisite to verify her facts and prove her statements?

I am such a sincere admirer of your interesting journal, and of the splendid work performed by the Association of which it is the organ, that the perusal in its pages of such uncalled-for and baseless accusations as those to which I refer cannot but produce a more than usually disagreeable effect. I enclose my card, and as one who, though not a County Council lecturer, is very well acquainted with the work of some who are,

I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully,  
LUCY A. E. DEANE.

[We beg to inform Miss Deane that the NURSING RECORD is not the organ of any one Association, but the representative organ of the Nursing Profession. We hope to be able to deal with the subject of her letter at some length next week.—ED.]

#### TEACHERS AND LECTURERS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I wish to state as a National Health Society's student, trained at the Chelsea Infirmary by Miss de Pledge for teaching the poor to make the best use of materials at hand in Nursing in their own homes, I stayed at the Infirmary one year, and received careful attention, gaining great experience whilst there. No one can be received for less than six months, but students can remain longer if they desire.

The National Health Society's students are not qualified

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to Nurse, neither do they pretend to be trained Nurses where questions of life and death are involved, but as teachers of the best methods of helping the poor to make the best use of materials at their disposal in their own homes.

Yours truly,  
TRUTH.

[If these ladies do not profess to be trained Nurses, in other words, if they do not profess to understand what they do profess to teach—the nursing of the sick—it is somewhat difficult to understand their precise value to the public. But if they do not "pretend to be trained Nurses," we should be glad to know for what purpose, and under what pretence, they wear the uniform of a trained Nurse.—ED.]

#### "THE PRODUCTION OF NURSING LECTURERS."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I was much interested to see in your notice of the book about "Women and their Professions," by Miss Bateson, that some light was thrown on "the manufacture of Nurse-lecturers." It is extremely "hard lines" that the normal difficulties standing in the way of women earning a fair living should be so enormously increased by the crowding-in of amateurs. And this has happened to an incredible extent in the lecturing profession. The County Councils were suddenly called upon to spend large sums of money, and good salaries were, in the first instance, offered to teachers of nursing and its allied subjects. The bait was fairly tempting, and the result was a rush on all hands of lecturers on nursing, who could neither lecture nor nurse, being disqualified for the first by means of their limited knowledge of the rudiments of language and grammar, and for the latter because they had only had from three to six months' training in a Workhouse Infirmary! Shades of Sarah! The old lady herself knew far more of the science and practice of Nursing than do these latter-day smatterers. I have long been hopeful that the Royal British Nurses' Association would take up and deal effectively with this question. Of course, the public also should be protected from the abuses which must follow from the insufficient and misleading teaching and advice which comes from "Professors," who are in reality mere pupils. But the County Councils must be held responsible in this matter. They have no right to waste public money by providing ignorant and elementary, when useful and expert, teaching is needed. It is a healthy sign of the times to hear that organising secretaries of some County Councils are now on the alert and take the trouble to inquire into the kind and length of training undergone by Nurse teachers. The time, it is hoped, will soon be passed when length and breadth of cap strings is held to constitute a claim to be considered a teacher of Nursing. Now, what I want to maintain is that the Nurses' Corporation should take some steps to protect its members from being unfairly competed with by lecturers who have absolutely no title to teach Nursing. Many a wardmaid could undertake the work with more professional skill and knowledge than do many of the County Council Nurse teachers with whom I am brought into relation. I sincerely hope that all well-qualified lecturers on Nursing will take part in this correspondence, and give instances which have come under their notice of incapacity and ignorance on the part of these "mill-manufactured" teachers.

Truly yours,  
TRADES-UNIONIST.

[We have received some important and interesting letters on the above subject, which we are compelled to hold over till next week. It is a subject we feel much interest in, as it seriously affects the position and status of the professional Nurse.—ED.]

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