

interprets the motive which led me to intervene, I trust you will allow me to make a personal explanation. Let me premise that the threatened motion was one of want of confidence, and was founded solely on the conviction that Sir James Crichton Browne misapprehends the nature of the duties and obligations which appertain to the position of chairman at meetings where contentious matters have to be settled by the vote of the majority. Further than this I would be sorry to go, and certainly would not for a moment attribute to Sir James Crichton Browne any wilful misuse of the power which accrued to him as Chairman. That he regarded himself as possessed of additional power of an official kind is proved by his statement that he was in the chair not merely as Chairman, but as Vice-President—a remark which seems to afford a key to his attitude both at the annual and the previous special general meeting. Now, when it is considered, on the one hand, that the meetings of the Royal British Nurses' Association are chiefly given over to conflicts between two parties, one of which is in office, and, on the other, that the chairman regards himself not as a chairman pure and simple, but as representing in some sense the official party, it follows that he must either neglect his representative duties by being neutral or cease to be neutral in discharging them. In light of these considerations, it appeared to me that the position indicated by Sir James Crichton Browne was untenable, and I, therefore, protested against its adoption.

I am, yours faithfully,

JOHN BIERNACKI.

Plaistow Hospital, West Ham, E.,

July 25th, 1896.

[All who disapprove of the proceedings at recent meetings of the Association will be grateful to Dr. Biernacki for his quiet, logical condemnation of the indefensible attitude assumed by the Chairman.—ED.]

#### QUALIFICATION FOR REGISTRATION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I do not think there can be two opinions concerning the question addressed to the readers of your paper by "A Lady Superintendent." Unless the Registration Board of the Royal British Nurses' Association keeps up the high standard of qualification demanded by the best Training Schools, it is quite certain that the best Nurses will not register. For instance, in the Hospital to which I belong many of my colleagues refuse to register, because on several occasions pupils who have not completed their three years' training, and, in consequence, have not been certificated here, have been accepted upon a patch-work training in other Institutions. This cannot be held to advance the efficiency of Nursing, nor is it fair to the Training Schools. But what can we expect from an Association of Nurses from whose Council all our leading metropolitan Matrons have been removed (with the exception of the Vice-Chairman, the Matron of the Middlesex Hospital) upon the suggestion of the hon. officers; for we are well aware in this Hospital that the sub-committee who drew up the present unjust Council list was composed of the hon. officers and a Sister from St. Bartholomew's Hospital only. The officials are attempting to govern the Royal British Nurses' Association through the packed vote of the subordinate Nurses of the

Middlesex Hospital and Chelsea Infirmary. Let them try. I predict that they will fail.

Yours,

LATE M.R.B.N.A.

#### SUGGESTIVE THERAPEUTICS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was glad to see in last week's RECORD that other Nurses take an interest in hypnotism too.

I believe Professor Bernheim and others regard hypnotism as a form of hysteria. More especially the French School, but Dr. Milne-Bramwell, who follows Braid closely, does *not*.

According to Dr. Bramwell, the best subjects are those in the best health, and the more highly educated a patient is, the more susceptible he is, because he has learned to concentrate his thoughts, which is, of course, the first step.

I don't think it would be possible to force *everybody* into a state of hysteria (that much mis-used word) in order to cure them, nor into a highly nervous condition. On the contrary, the cases I have seen have been soothed and quieted.

If "A Nurse of Nervous Cases" is in London, I would be very glad to lend her my books. I have Bernheim's "Suggestive Therapeutics," and "Moll (of Berlin) on Hypnotism." I have also a year and a half of monthly numbers of the "Revue de l'Hypnotisme," and a couple of pamphlets contributed by Dr. Bramwell to "Brain." One is a short, but very interesting, sketch of the life and ideas of Braid, and the other is on personally-observed cases of hypnotism.

It seems impossible to define hypnotism, because there are so many opinions, and every day there are discoveries made.

There are two or three great schools where different methods are employed, but I believe the theories of the Nancy School are most in vogue all over the world, though even they have certain errors according to Braid.

Mr. Ernest Hart went to Paris some few years ago, to investigate, and unfortunately hit on Dr. Luys, who, as everybody knows, is *over*-enthusiastic. His theories and methods so impressed Mr. Hart, and prejudiced him against hypnotism, either as a curative agent—or any other than the Devil's own agent—that no notice of hypnotic lectures is ever acknowledged in the *British Medical Journal*.

There *are* medical men who are willing to acknowledge its value, not only in (so-called) nervous cases, but in fevers, &c. But, if we remember how every movement and thought is controlled and actuated by nerves, is this so wonderful?

There is a Dr. Wetterstrand in Stockholm, who employs hypnotism in conjunction with the Weir-Mitchell, or Rest Treatment. To my thinking, this is an excellent plan, both for the patient and the Nurse. The patient is hypnotised and placed *en rapport* with the Nurse, from whom she takes her food, &c. There is none of that weariness and struggling against discipline, and enforced rest and seclusion, or the large quantities of milk and food given in this treatment. After five or six weeks, or perhaps even less time, the patient gets up perfectly well and refreshed, and with no unpleasant remembrances. The Nurse, too, is not worn out with the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)