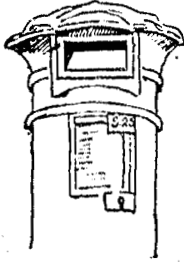


## Letters to the Editor.

## NOTES, QUERIES. &amp;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.*

## DOCTORS DIFFER.

## QUACK NURSES FOR BRADFORD.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—Messrs. Horrocks and Metcalfe, the general practitioners of Bradford who are at the same time running the scheme for supplying Quack Nurses, deprecate a discussion of the merits of their scheme, because it is "personal"! In one sense the scheme is personal, because it is the scheme of those two gentlemen; they are its parents and advertisers. They have no Committee, though the subject of the provision of a public supply of nurses is usually considered sufficiently important to be undertaken by a public body and not by two individuals. I believe it is unique in the history of the medical profession that two members of it, who are in general practice, should at the same time run a nursing business. Like Cæsar's wife, medical practitioners should be above suspicion, above all things in such a question as that of exercising an influence over the nurses, trained or untrained, who are to attend the patients of other practitioners. This scheme of Messrs. Horrocks and Metcalfe is their own private venture. That Mr. Horrocks, as Hon. Sec. to the Bradford Medico-Ethical Society, and therefore cognisant of its objects and Rules, violated both by having a paper read at a meeting of the society, and then took advantage of this violation of the Rules to quote opinions expressed there as a prop for his scheme, cannot make anyone approve of his action, or make his scheme less objectionable. The Society is not promoting the scheme. The letter advertising it, and calling for women of all sorts, trained and untrained, to enrol themselves as Nurses under the banner of Messrs. Horrocks and Metcalfe, was signed by those gentlemen, and was inserted in the daily papers. Had the notification of their proposed new line of business been merely intended for the information of medical men, it would have appeared only in medical papers. But the comparative privacy of such papers would not have suited for advertising purposes—and so the daily papers were used.

In their letter in the RECORD of June 16th, these two gentlemen explain that by registering all applicants who pay their half-crown, and promise to pay 3s. or 4s. on receiving employment through the agency of these two medical practitioners, "no guarantee of efficiency" is implied. Just so—they take the registration fee, and some unfortunate persons are free to engage any woman on the Register, and may find they have secured a drunken and disreputable, as well as utterly ignorant person! This is the essence of the scheme. Is it not obvious that any person that may apply for a nurse or so called "help," would believe

that it was impossible that persons without character or skill could be kept on the Register of two members of an honourable profession? No protestation to the contrary could obviate this. But if some person who engaged one of Messrs. Horrocks and Metcalfe's "helps" found by rueful experience that he had been completely deceived, that the "help" gave far more trouble than assistance, and also that his home was utterly upset by her, would he not feel justly irate with those who kept the Register, and conclude that he had been deceived? What effect would the protestations of Messrs. Horrocks and Metcalfe have if in reply to indignant complaints they said—"My dear Sir, we gave no guarantee; we register all women, char-women, destitute widows, all who want a job at nursing when all else fails, and who pay the fees—and you must take your luck as to what kind of a help you get." Your readers will form their own estimate of the rectitude of keeping a Register of this character, especially when the keepers of it have the honour to belong to a profession the word of whose members has hitherto been regarded as a very great guarantee.

That the foisting of women of this class on the public through the instrumentality of two medical men implies some approval and guarantee which would have weight with the public, is quite unavoidable.

The scheme has nothing whatever commendable, and is entirely unworthy of the advocacy of any medical practitioner.

Your obedient servant,  
THOS. WHITESIDE HIME.

Bradford.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—It appears to me that the criticism in connection with sick-helps in Bradford is unnecessary and futile. It is a well-known fact that almost every doctor in England who has any working-class patients has frequently to have recourse to the services of untrained women to look after the sick. Your correspondents ignore the fact that no trained nurse would or could be expected to undertake the duties which these women perform. The working-man cannot afford to pay the ordinary fee for a trained nurse, neither can he give her the accommodation or food which she expects. The public are compelled to have untrained nurses, and the suggestion that if a list were kept of their names there would not be so much difficulty in getting them when required is a most reasonable and inoffensive one. No new class is created: the women are there and utilised now, and it is only a matter of convenience. There is no confusion as to their real position. They are not trained nurses, and they don't pretend to be. But there appears to be an organised attempt at quackery on the part of some trained nurses. The constant repetition of the word "Profession" in connection with nursing is absurd and contemptible. It appears to be forgotten that nurses are instruments to carry out the directions of the medical man. To carry out these directions efficiently they must be trained and have some practical skill. This is an art. But by no stretch of the imagination can it be legitimately assumed that this makes nursing a profession, unless it is desired to usurp the functions of the medical man. Nursing is not a learned calling and a nurse can't presume to take the initiative. If she wishes to do this let her qualify as a member of the medical profession. Medical men

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)