

do not sympathise with "the professional aspirations of nurses," but they would like to see them better trained and less presuming.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

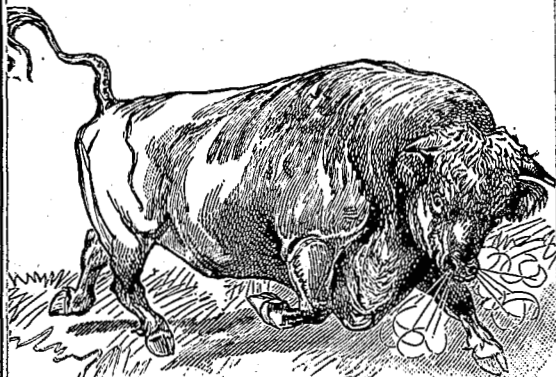
M. D.

[We welcome this letter, which we are sorry does not bear the signature of our correspondent, as an outspoken expression of opinion. We respect a man who openly avows his attitude of hostility to the professional claims and aspiration of nurses, as we know where we are when he says plainly that he looks upon nurses simply as "instruments to carry out the directions of the medical man." It is a more honest position to take up than that of men who pose as the friends of nurses, profess sympathy with their desire for legal recognition and their wishes for better education, who, having committed themselves to this policy are placed in official positions in a nurses' association pledged to obtain State Registration, and who then deliberately support a Resolution condemning legal Registration of Nurses as "inexpedient *in principle* and injurious to the best interests of nurses." It is not the opposition of avowed enemies, but the treachery of those who, while posing as our friends, stab us in a vital spot, that is to be feared. We must however strongly deprecate the opinion expressed by our correspondent that there appears to be "an organized attempt at quackery on the part of some trained nurses," and that "the constant repetition of the word 'Profession' in connection with nursing is absurd and contemptible." Nurses have every right, both in the public interest and their own to claim this position. It is their highly skilled knowledge

and work which alone makes the dangerous and daring operations performed by medical men possible. These operations could not take place were it not that the efficient nurse can with confidence be left in charge of the patient by the medical man 23 hours out of the 24. Are her years of training, her days and nights of strain and anxiety, of anxious watching, her expenditure of vital force, her sympathy and skill to count for nothing? Is the public to be at the mercy of incompetent women when, if it knew how to differentiate, it might obtain competent ones for the same fees? Lastly, is a nurse to give up her personality, her conscience, her mind, her rights as a reasonable human being, and transform herself into a machine, never exercising her God-given right of judgment, but being merely the "instrument" of the medical man for good—or evil? In saying this we must make it quite plain that the more highly trained a nurse is, the more scrupulously careful is she as to carrying out medical directions. There are however many occasions on which a nurse must act on her own judgment. For instance, hæmorrhage sets in, in an operation case. Is she to send for the medical man, and then sit down with folded hands because she "can't presume to take the initiative." Is she in short to allow her patient to die, out of her exceeding deference to the absent medical man? He would be the first to blame her in such a case. Then let him see to it that her work receives the recognition which is its due. We are fully aware that the majority of "medical men do not sympathise with the professional aspirations of nurses." We did not sit upon the executive committee of the R. B. N. A. for ten years without learning that fact.—Ed.]

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Signed

*J. Liebig*

In Blue.

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