

a most anxious and responsible sort, and likely for some time to come to occupy every moment that can be snatched from the management of the Institutions. It would obviously, therefore, be impossible for me to go with minute detail into the pros and cons of a dispute concerning which you yourself say that the correspondence produced in support of one side of it extends over several years.

"Please do not believe for one moment that I am unwilling to face publicly, and in any proper way that may be suggested, the consequences of my well-considered and very regretfully determined-upon action in Sister Clara's case. Far from it, although one naturally shrinks from entering into controversy that may be endless as to its length and, perhaps, profitless as to its result. But, as I have already stated, other causes must, for perhaps a fortnight, absorb every hour, so that I do not see how I can hope without considerable delay to respond to your courteous request.

"Believe me to be, dear Sir,

"Faithfully yours,

"THOS. J. BARNARDO.

"The Editor of *Nursing Record*, St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, E.C."

After carefully going over the whole circumstances of the case, perusing the correspondence, and questioning Sister Clara upon several matters not mentioned in the correspondence, we forwarded a second letter to Mr. Barnardo, which is here given:—

"St. Dunstan's House"

"Fetter Lane, E.C.,"

"August 10th, 1889.

"Dear Sir,—I have avoided replying to your favour of May the 20th, in the matter affecting Sister Clara and yourself, for two reasons. Firstly, because, as you state in that letter, and as I have noticed through the medium of the daily papers, you have, to use your own words, been 'involved in litigation of a serious character.' I therefore did not wish to add to your labours in any way until I believed you to be in a position, such as I conclude you are in now, to give the matter I alluded to your personal and undivided attention. Secondly, because of the very voluminous correspondence which Sister Clara has placed in my hands, my own time having been much taken up with other work of late, I wanted to make myself thoroughly familiar with the circumstances of the case before expressing myself upon it in one way or the other.

"I am now in a position, and I feel it my duty to do so, to put the matter fully before that which even you must feel disposed to admit is a perfectly unbiassed tribunal, and that tribunal

shall be the readers of this journal, who I am sure, as a large number of them are associated with many of our largest and most important Hospitals, will be, by practical experience, quite competent to judge upon the merits or demerits of the affair, particularly as to whether Sister Clara, or yourself, is at fault. It will be for you to correct any statement requiring correction which may be made, or offer any explanation which you may consider consistent with the attitude you have taken up, and to further this I shall have pleasure in placing at your disposal the requisite space in the columns of the *Record*.

"There is one point in your letter upon which at the outset I must differ with you, and that is where you state that the matter is 'of private feeling and arrangement, pure and simple, and that no principle affecting general Hospital management or nursing control is involved.' With all due deference to the opinion you have expressed, I maintain that not only does the matter affect general Hospital management and Nursing control, but it also affects the public, from whom every penny necessary to maintain your institution and to defray the expenses of your own salary, as well as the remuneration of the Matrons, Nurses, and general Staff under you, is obtained, and for this reason alone, apart from the broader principles which I consider are involved in the matter, I am taking the opportunity of making the Hospital and Nursing world, as well as the general public, fully acquainted with the facts as they have been presented to me,

"I am, dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"THE EDITOR.

"Thos. J. Barnardo, Esq., F.R.C.S.E."

In reply to which Mr. Barnardo writes as under:—

"Dear Sir,—Yours of August 21 only reached me here to-day, as I am preparing to leave England in the service of our institutions.

"I have not with me any part of the correspondence referred to in yours, so am quite unable to reply on its merits.

"I will only say that, so far as my *memory* serves me, Sister Clara's one grievance was that, having given notice of her intention to leave her post as Matron of Her Majesty's Hospital, she was sent away in *one* month after she gave notice, instead of after *three* months.

"Having always been paid by monthly cheque, and there never having been any agreement or understanding to the contrary, Sister Clara was only entitled to *one* month's notice. Yet, in view of her five years' service under happier conditions, and the esteem I long held her in, I would willingly have allowed her *three* months' notice, or, indeed,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)