

needed a person as a housekeeper who would have a more commanding appearance with servants and rough boys. But to suggest—or even to insinuate—that I spoke of your sister's 'looks,' and to say that I wished for some person who was 'nice-looking,' is, as you know very well, entirely foreign to anything which passed between us.

"I hope you have done this inadvertently and not designedly. I hope you have not intentionally sought to embitter by an accusation of that sort the last few weeks of your stay at the Infirmary.

"I have all along objected to your sister remaining at the Infirmary⁽⁶⁾, and wished very much that she did not do so. The grounds I have always told you with perfect plainness of speech⁽⁶⁾, always in a kind and courteous manner, always in such a way as a gentleman and a Christian would speak of such things; and I am bound here to say that I know enough by experience of your spirit and *temper*⁽⁷⁾ to know right well that if I had even inadvertently made any such references to your sister's 'good looks,' that you would have resented it in a manner which I could not soon have forgotten, for, as you are well aware, and as the correspondence before me painfully reveals, almost from the first three⁽⁸⁾ months of your stay with us you began to exhibit a spirit and temper which I could not but consider deplorable and unworthy of one occupying the position you did, so that it is *very unlikely* that an expression such as you refer to, and which you must have regarded as insulting, could have been uttered without, as I say, your having resented it in the most forcible way you knew how.

"There is another matter in your letter which I must refer to. In speaking of your resignation you say that probably the intimation of this will cause me 'to defer the re-arrangement of the Hospital until I and my co-workers have left.'

"What do you mean? I did not engage you and your co-workers *en bloc*, but you were engaged alone, in an *individual* capacity. The other workers were also engaged each in her *individual* capacity: some, like Miss Beddington, were engaged personally by myself; others were engaged by you, with my permission, and *acting only as my agent*. If any of these desire to leave, they must, as honourable women—I will not say as Christians—each one give an *individual notice to me or you*. Those whom I engaged will send me notice, as you have done, if they wish to leave. Those who send you notice, send you notice as my agent, and it will be your duty the moment any such notice comes to transfer it to me, so that I may be prepared to replace at the proper time those who leave.

"But what am I to think by the sentence itself, except that, having in a fit of anger sent in your resignation, you have communicated the fact to all the other persons working in the Hospital with a view to influence them, and probably *have* influenced them, to follow your example? How you reconcile such conduct with the great responsibilities of your position I do not know. Certainly it is a new view for the Matron of a Hospital to use the influences and *opportunities* so unsuspectingly placed in her hands, for injuring the work at the head of which she has been placed for five years.

In closing, I observe that your notice is intended to extend to *three* months. I have no doubt you have some good reason for this. I cannot discover anything of this in the notes of my earlier letters to you, and so cannot see that three months' notice was arranged between us.⁽⁹⁾ It is possible I have overlooked the copy of the letter setting this forth, and I need hardly say I have no wish to go behind any compact or agreement that may have been made between us. I shall, therefore, be much obliged if you will either give me the date of any letter in which three months' notice is agreed to, or give me a copy, if you have such, of any letter or agreement in which that compact occurs. Awaiting your reply,

"Believe me to be,
"Very faithfully yours,
"THOS. J. BARNARDO."

"Sister Clara,
"Her Majesty's Hospital,
"Stepney Causeway, E."

"P.S.—Since dictating the above I have heard, to my intense astonishment, from Mr. Cannan that you told him yesterday that many of the Nurses were leaving on the 12th inst. I told Mr. Cannan I could not believe that any such action had been taken by you; and I shall await your explanation before passing any judgment upon the act."

Upon which Sister Clara offers the following remarks:—

- (1) I fully agree with this expression.
- (2) Perhaps Mr. Barnardo will be able in due course to produce these notes he makes such a point of.
- (3) It is my particular and express desire that all Mr. Barnardo's correspondence may be put before the readers of the *Nursing Record*.
- (4) It is my painful duty to have here to flatly and emphatically contradict this misleading and untrue statement.
- (5) To whom did Mr. Barnardo express his objections, and why did he not take a manly and business-like way of expressing his objections?

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