

is not women alone who incline to leaders rather than principles. Here is the country convulsed over Protection *versus* Free Trade, and I notice that in a big daily even the Cabinet is divided by a Parliamentary critic not into Protectionists and Anti-Protectionists, but into "Pro-Joeites, Anti-Joeites, and Wobblers. Could the bias of the human mind towards a personality rather than a principle be more strikingly demonstrated, when even the Ministry of this country can be so described?

I am,
Dear Madam
Yours obediently,
PRINCIPLE.

NURSES AND THRIFT.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—It is time that these loose assertions regarding the Royal National Pension Fund should cease. Setting aside other highly debatable points in the letter of "Independence" in your issue of July 18th, she states as a fact what is—and has been for at least ten years, if not always—strictly untrue, viz., that those who join the Fund "when they draw out their money actually have to pay 5 per cent., and take out less than they put in." This, as it stands, is quite inaccurate, as, while it is true that those who withdraw from the Fund do have 5 per cent. on their premiums "deducted" for working expenses (*i.e.*, deducted from the 2½ per cent. compound interest to which they would be entitled if they remained in the Fund), yet a policy-holder never receives back less than she has paid in. She always has her capital restored intact. The interest she forfeits to a greater or less extent. Now, as a policy-holder in the Fund, which is a business concern, it is to my disadvantage financially to have it depreciated and misrepresented, and I have a right to protest.

I therefore call upon "Independence" to come out into the open and fight fairly, not to sow errors among a peculiarly credulous branch of the public while protecting herself by remaining anonymous. In other words, let her give me her name, and the dates of her entering and leaving the Fund, in order that I may at once cause to be thoroughly investigated the implied statement that she (or, for that matter, anyone else) has within the last ten years received back less than she had paid into the Fund. If she will do this, and succeeds in substantiating her charge, I will make her a public apology in this journal. In that event the officials of the Fund will no doubt also apologise, and, furthermore, offer her compensation for their breach of contract, for they say distinctly in their prospectus: "A policy-holder never receives back less than she has paid in." If "Independence" will not follow this straight and business-like course she must excuse me for telling her, as plainly as one woman can tell another, that she is acting with neither honesty nor courage. Oddly enough, it was only last spring that I was hotly pursuing the same hare, started by another ex-policy-holder who shall be (though she does not deserve to be) nameless. On this occasion I gave up the chase upon finding that another nurse with a prejudice in favour of the truth was on the same track, and nearer to the quarry. The upshot of it all was that the offender was compelled to entirely withdraw her charge, and signed a letter stating that she had been mistaken, and was very

sorry for what she had done. Of course the apology ought to have been made as publicly as the slander, but one cannot have everything. I shall be more than happy to aid again in similar enterprise, and will readily undertake the necessary correspondence with the officials of the Fund when I am furnished by "Independence" with the requisite particulars. The other errors in the letter regret that I have at present no time to go into, but trust that readers will, at any rate, reserve judgment and not swallow all that they are told, even in print without giving a hearing to the other side.

I remain, dear Madam,
Yours truly,
M. D. BRINTON.

15, Gordon Place, Campden Hill, W.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—May I correct an error in my letter published in your issue of the 8th inst., on the subject of the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses? The word "founders" should have read "founder" as there was only one—*i.e.*, Sir Henry C. Burdett.

I am, Madam,
Yours faithfully,
J. WILSON.

[The word "founders" appears in the type-written manuscript of Miss Wilson's letter which is before us.—Ed.]

Comments and Replies.

Mrs. C., Cromer.—Izal is an ideal disinfectant; 10 tablespoonful in five pints of water destroys all pathogenic microbes in five minutes. It has been officially adopted as a germicide by H.M. Government.

Certificated Nurse.—Mission work abroad requires special qualifications. It is, of course, necessary to satisfy the authorities of the mission to which you offer your services that you are in sympathy with their efforts, and will endeavour to further its objects. It is not likely, whatever society you join, that you will be expected to do much direct mission work—that is to say, teaching. If you undertake to nurse, your time will be fully occupied as a rule.

Staff Nurse.—We think the nurse who objects to care for a patient on account of his colour has mistaken her vocation. Colour is but skin deep, while human nature is the same all the world over. So is human suffering, and it is the duty of a nurse, as all worthy members of our profession will acknowledge, to do their utmost for the alleviation of suffering wherever it exists, without distinction of colour, creed, or sex.

Notices.

A HELPING HAND.

The Editor will be greatly obliged if regular subscribers who receive an additional copy of this journal will pass it on to some friend who is likely to be interested in the aims of the journal, and also if they will encourage their friends to become subscribers.

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page VIII.

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