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**Editorial.**

**A MESS OF POTTAGE.**

It is of extreme interest to note that the scheme brought forward by Dr. Worcester, of Waltham, U.S.A.—who, although not a trained nurse, has by some extraordinary means been appointed Professor of Nursing at Harvard University—and which has aroused such indignation amongst nurses' organisations in the United States, has many points of similarity with the scheme for which City Financiers in this country are now seeking incorporation from the Board of Trade, and which was so severely criticised at the Hanover Square meeting on Wednesday last.

A leading American nurse writes this week:—"I can hardly sleep nights for wondering how you are going to come out against those powers of darkness which are assailing you. Your danger is more urgent and menacing than ours. Oh, words fail—but I am sure that the projectors of both schemes have plotted the thing together. The proposals are the same in both instances. The allusion to guard against labour unionism in the English Memorandum is alluded to by a correspondent of the *American Journal of Nursing*, who quotes the words of a surgeon at home that the nurses would be forming a trade union. I am sure that men of both nations have wagged heads and tongues over their bigoted notions. An intelligent man would be ashamed to speak of labour unions as if they were some kind of horned monster. It is simply using words to intimidate the ignorant by the suggestion of something wicked."

The paragraph in the Memorandum to which our correspondent alludes, and which from our point of view is the *raison d'être* for the inauguration of a scheme for enforcing despotic lay control over the Nursing Profession in this country, is as follows:—

"It shall not be lawful for the Society to impose upon nurses presenting themselves for

examination, or nurses holding a certificate of the Society, or to support with its funds, any regulation which, if an object of the Society, would make it a trade union."

If we read between the lines of this clause, it means that trained nurses who place themselves in the power of the autocratic Council of this Society shall not be at liberty to associate themselves together in a professional society for legitimate purposes, as are all other bodies of workers in this country, male and female, professional and industrial. It is this fear of co-operation amongst nurses which has been the mainspring of the opposition and terrorism which has done all in its power during the last seventeen years to prevent justifiable association between professional nurses, and which has been afforded constant publicity and support in the columns of the *Hospital* newspaper. And trained nurses must realise the significance of the attempt to obtain powers to continue a system of despotism under the authority of the Board of Trade, and must fight against it with every means in their power.

Trained Nurses now, on both sides of the Atlantic, realise that Burdettism and Worcesterism are one and the same thing, and appreciating the intolerance in which both have their root, we have no fear but that in a strong and united force they will oppose its reactionary influence and overcome it.

Nurses of both nations may congratulate themselves that in each case they have an organ in the Press, keenly alive to the dangers with which they are menaced, and vigilant and alert in regard to their interests.

The gilded bait, and vague promises of "complete security for all competent nurses," will scarcely attract sensible women at this stage in their organisation. They realise that, as in a nation, so in a profession, representation of the class governed on their governing body is indispensable, for they alone know its real needs, and they are far too wide awake to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

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