

"With regard to such registration and inspection," our contemporary says, "there can be no difference of opinion, provided that the conditions of registration are such as to guarantee that the building itself and the sanitary, domestic, and nursing arrangements are satisfactory. Such a scheduled list of registered homes would be of great value, and would be very beneficial to the interests of the reputable type of institution. The control and the management of the institution would be simple enough, and the filling of returns would be a matter easy to arrange for. But the question of inspection is a much more difficult problem, although without some form of official visitation registration would be a useless formality. Inspection would doubtless be opposed by the owners or the Matrons of many homes, especially upon the grounds of the intrusion on the privacy of the patients and of the difficulty of attending the inspector when the Matron and staff happen to be engaged at operations or waiting upon the medical practitioners who might be visiting their cases. Most innovations of this kind, however, though generally feared and often condemned beforehand, if they are carefully conceived and worked out, prove to be less irksome and inconvenient in practice than in theory. The suggestion is made in the public interest, and, far from being prejudicial to the interests of the nursing homes, should redound to their advantage."

The Hon. Sydney Holland and Sir Henry Burdett.

We referred last week to the pamphlet which has just been published by the Hon. Sydney Holland consisting of the correspondence which has recently taken place between himself and the solicitors of the *Hospital* newspaper.

It commences with the circular letter sent out last June by Mr. Holland, and which our readers may remember we published in full in our issue of June 17th. The special *Hospital Sunday Supplement* of Sir Henry Burdett's paper states that "its sole design is to serve the voluntary institutions, and consequently the charges which are made for appeals are nominal." Mr. Holland termed this "nothing short of inaccurate and misleading humbug." He gave figures to prove that the paper made "extortionate charges" to hospitals advertising in it, and that the real object of this Supplement was "to bring grist to the mill" of Sir Henry Burdett and his co-proprietors of the paper.

On June 17th, Sir Henry Burdett made a characteristic reply to Mr. Holland in his paper, and the same week his solicitors sent Mr. Holland a letter asserting that the statements made in his circular were "very misleading, and are calculated to do much injury to the proprietors of the *Hospital*. They are the more damaging from your well-known position in the hospital world, and from their being

issued from the London Hospital." They, therefore, called upon Mr. Holland to withdraw his circular. On June 19th, Messrs. Lewis and Lewis replied that Mr. Holland refused to withdraw his circular and was "quite prepared to substantiate its contents in a Court of Law, and, indeed, would be glad of the opportunity for doing so."

Those who are not acquainted with Sir Henry Burdett, would of course imagine that a writ was issued within twenty-four hours against Mr. Holland; and will therefore be surprised to learn that his solicitors replied on June 22nd to Messrs. Lewis and Lewis by sending them a copy of the *Hospital* newspaper of June 17th, containing Sir Henry Burdett's reply! This Messrs. Lewis and Lewis treated with due gravity, and demolished clause by clause; bringing out the additional fact, that in Sir Henry Burdett's own publication of "*Hospitals and Charities*," a hospital was charged for its advertisement considerably more than a tradesman for his. Once more, it was suggested that Sir Henry Burdett should submit the matter to a Court of Law.

It took nearly three weeks for this communication to be digested, and then on July 11th Sir Henry Burdett's solicitors wrote a lengthy letter adhering to the statements made in the *Hospital* of June 17th, and concluding, "no useful purpose can be served by continuing this correspondence"!! Messrs. Lewis and Lewis replied on July 17th, that it was obvious "their reason for taking this course is that they prefer to refuse to reply to Mr. Holland's main accusations, and to content themselves with evading the point;" and so the correspondence closes.

The main points of interest for the nursing profession and the public are that the Hon. Sydney Holland has in a printed circular proved by figures and facts that the philanthropic pretensions of the *Hospital* are sheer "humbug," and are simply designed "to bring grist to the mill" of its owners; that Sir Henry Burdett felt the matter sufficiently grave to instruct his solicitors to assert that this circular was calculated to do much injury and was very damaging, and called for its withdrawal; and finally that when Mr. Holland flatly refused to withdraw a word he had written, and suggested that Sir Henry Burdett should bring an action against him, the proprietors of the *Hospital* preferred to swallow the exposure of their philanthropic "humbug," and to pocket the "injury" and "damage" they asserted they had sustained, rather than risk the publicity which an action for libel would have involved. Any comment on these facts is unnecessary, for their meaning will be quite understood in the hospital world. And it may be assumed that, in future, any hospital authorities who consider themselves compelled to advertise in Sir Henry Burdett's paper will at least decline to pay for that questionable privilege more than the current rates charged to ordinary advertisers.

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