

In conclusion I can only briefly refer your readers to the Memorandum and the Report of the Royal Commission by Dr. Downes, who is thoroughly conversant with the nursing under the Poor Law. He writes that many poor persons prefer treatment in an infirmary to that in one of the large voluntary hospitals, because they do not care for being made subjects for medical teaching, and object to being handled by students. The evidence, too, given by Mr. Davy, the Chief Inspector to the Local Government Board, is all important—viz., that "The whole character of the administration has changed. . . . and a class of sick come into the Poor-Law Infirmaries now that never did come before."

One could almost endlessly continue such references, but I will confine myself to reminding you of the testimony borne by such an authority as Miss Amy Hughes as to the value and usefulness of the Infirmary Trained Nurse in district work.

It is the fashion to decry and sneer at the Poor-Law in all its branches, but it is ignorant and cruel to condemn so lightheartedly a class of men and women (infirmary officials) the devoted lives of many of whom should render them objects of admiration rather than of contemptuous misrepresentation.

We all recognise the great work of the London Hospital, in which several of the present Matrons of Poor Law Infirmaries were trained. Why should Mr. Sydney Holland endeavour to injure the reputation of those who are working as faithfully and as devotedly as the nurses of the great voluntary hospitals in the cause of the sick poor?

Yours truly,
MATRON OF A METROPOLITAN POOR LAW
INFIRMARY.

JOURNALISTIC TYRANNY.

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

MADAM,—I thank you for a paragraph in your issue of September 11th., not so much because of your more personal remarks, as for your declaration of the necessity of setting our faces against the one-sided partial attitude taken by some journals, and even the so-called leading dailies, to which there are one or two brilliant exceptions, I allow.

Fair and open-minded inspection of the closest nature I for one will always welcome; but to representatives of class journals like *The Hospital*, of which Sir Henry Burdett is, I understand, manager, with his peculiar ideas of platform responsibilities and honour—or to those of *The Lancet*, which refused to insert a prepaid advertisement sent by me for a Resident Medical Officer, inspection of this Hospital will be denied.

Sir Henry Burdett's action, and his conduct of the correspondence, were weak and bad; but Mr. Thomas Bryant has not yet even acknowledged my two applications and challenge to him to explain his assertion: that cases "neglected" and badly treated here had been received at another hospital! You, Madam, and all who know out-patients' applications, and have experience of the ways of some, at least, of them, will not be much impressed by this vague and gratuitous statement; but to the public, to whom such words "go forth,"

they, no doubt, carry damaging suspicion, though totally devoid of serious foundation. First, Mr. Sydney Holland, then Sir Henry Burdett and Mr. Thomas Bryant (with that professed teacher of Christian charity, the Rev. C. H. Grundy, to back them up), have made injurious assertions against this Hospital, and refused to give authority for, or to prove their words. Truly, as a leading medical paper confessed lately, it is time the "personnel" of this Council and Distribution Committee of the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund was drastically revised.

The public who subscribe should see to this.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE W. F. ROBBINS,
Secretary.

National Anti-Vivisection Hospital and
Battersea General Hospital, S.W.

[It should be a strict rule that no proprietor or manager of a "hospital" newspaper which accepts financial support through its advertisement department from hospitals should be on the committee of public trust funds like the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund, which has the power of distributing large sums of money to such institutions, and which may be required to criticise their management. The position is incompatible with strict impartiality, and places such public newspapers in a totally false position.—Ed.]

NAY MORE, ABSURD!

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

DEAR MADAM,—In your issue to-day you say:—"We are sorry to note that the Committee of the Yeovil Hospital will in future run a private nursing department in the hope of making money out of the labour of the nurses."

I also am sorry, in that the statement is absolutely untrue, and I must therefore request you to publish this reply in its entirety.

A Surgical Home is about to be started very near the Yeovil Hospital for a class who can afford to pay for proper nursing and their surgeon's fees. Nurses will be employed at their proper wages for their work in connection with this Surgical Home.

The Yeovil Hospital is a very small one, with an average of 7 to 12 beds in use, and the Matron—a very capable person—it is thought, by consent of her Committee, will be able to direct the nurses at the Surgical Home; and in return for this service the Surgical Home proposes, if any balance is over at the end of the year, to hand it to the Hospital, but any deficit will not fall upon the Hospital but on guarantors.

The criticism that follows, of course, is thus worthless—nay, more—absurd!

W. A. HUNT.

Tyndale, Yeovil,
September 11th, 1909.

[Our correspondent is Dr. W. A. Hunt, the Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, and late Dental Surgeon to the Yeovil District Hospital. At a general meeting of the subscribers of the Yeovil Hospital, held recently, to consider a recommendation from a Sub-Committee, "That a Nurses' Institution

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)