

nurses and the public, Dr. Munro says: "It would be a very singular thing if medical officers of health who have very definite duties associating them with fever nurses, very definite duties in safeguarding the interests of the public in relation to fever hospitals, should be found advocating a course which was 'exceedingly injurious to fever nurses and the public,' so singular as to be unthinkable." This is all very well, but it would be equally singular if trained nurses who have very wide experience in the training of fever nurses, very deep interest in the professional advancement of fever nurses (and consequently in the efficient nursing and welfare of those who are nursed by them) should hold views similar to mine without very sure, very certain, and very definite foundation.

A separate fever register would fix and cramp the future of the fever nurse; therefore, an inferior type of woman would enter the fever hospitals. It, therefore, follows clearly that the public would suffer. Dr. Munro says: "We must have the position defined in the Bill." Imagine medical officers of health working to-day under a "position defined" under the Medical Act of 1858! It is impossible that everything can be defined under an Act of Parliament. The requirements of modern medicine necessitate many changes in the training and work of nurses.

Public health committees are usually composed of business men; business men are usually "level-headed" men; "level-headed" men are usually just men. As laymen, however, they have disadvantages, and may be unwittingly influenced sometimes by whispers of "cheaper labour" and "less trouble" from certain official lips. Business men know that cheapness does not mean economy in all cases, and that economies might be practised in other directions than upon the nurses!

Fever nurses will do well, therefore, to stand to their guns and resist all attempts to interfere with their rights, and the liberties of their profession. They will have to be on the alert however.

The "awakening supporters" are, after all, a small body in comparison with the overwhelming numbers of the nursing profession. This fact will, no doubt, be taken into serious account by hospital boards, who cannot afford to allow officialdom to ride rough-shod over the interests of the nursing profession.

Nurses' Registration Bill-mending appears to be a popular pastime among a small section of registrationists at the present time; but "awakening supporters" have yet to master many of the most elementary principles of a question which has absorbed time, trouble, and thought, among those who have been working for State Registration for years past.

Much as I have disagreed with Dr. Munro, I greatly appreciate his remark in regard to "statutory certificates." "If a certificate is satisfactory," he says, "why are general trained nurses pressing for registration?" Statutory certificates, advocated by Dr. P. H. Robertson, would render fever nurses "neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring." Such certificates would cause general and much confusion in the mind of the public who could not be

expected to distinguish between State certification and State registration.

I am, yours faithfully,  
E. A. STEVENSON.

#### A HISTORY OF NURSING.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In the third paragraph on page 129 of your issue of August 13th you say:—

"As time goes on the first two volumes of "A History of Nursing," written by Miss Dock and Miss Nutting, are becoming widely known, and finding their way into the hands of nurses all over the world."

You must please except Australia. A copy of the two-volume issue was apparently supplied to the Editor of the *Australasian Nurses' Journal*, the official organ of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, where it was favourably reviewed, but so far as I have been able to ascertain no copy of the book has been sent for sale either to Brisbane, Sydney, or Melbourne. Up to some six months ago the Melbourne Agent (that is, the Agent for Australia) of the firm who published the book had never seen it. His representative informed me later that owing to my representation to the publishers a copy was on the way to him, and would be sent here on approval immediately it arrived. It has not yet reached us. We very much wanted to see it, with a view to adopting it as a prize book for the annual examination. Of course, this class of book is not ordered from New York or London without some previous knowledge of its contents and suitability. I told Messrs. Putnams that if they sent a copy to each of the large nursing schools (of which there are, say, five out here) it might lead to sales.

I think your statement, quoted above, must be qualified unless possibly we here are regarded as "out of the world altogether, dont-cher-know."

Yours faithfully,  
A. P. PAYNE,

Secretary.

Brisbane Hospital.

[We should advise all hospitals in Australia to obtain the two volumes of this History of Nursing from Messrs. Putnams, 24, Bedford Street, Strand, London, W.C., price £1 1s., for the nurses' libraries. They can hardly be expected to supply the hospitals throughout the world with this valuable publication, though it ought to be on sale in Australia. So far the nurses of Federated Australia have not shown a great deal of interest in nursing affairs outside their own continent, nor have they entered into professional relations with their colleagues of other nations, as nurses in Canada and New Zealand have done, through the International Council of Nurses. Acquaintance with the history of their profession would certainly stimulate and broaden their outlook and interest.—Ed.]

#### OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

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

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)