

that the insertion of Mr. Homersham's letter would bring on a correspondence for which there is no room."—Yours truly,

E. M. HOMERSHAM.

24, South Villas, Camden Square, N. W.

September 5, 1890.

#### THE PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Dear Sir,—Please accept my warmest thanks for the book awarded to me for my essay, and which I received to-day. I cannot tell you how proud my fellow-Nurses are of me, and the many letters of congratulations I have received. I am afraid my friends will expect me to write another essay.—Yours very sincerely,

MARY JOHNSON, M.B.N.A.

St. Pancras Infirmary, King's Langley, Herts, Sept. 1, 1890.

#### LONDON HOSPITAL NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—As an old London Hospital Sister, I am glad to see that you have at last printed letters from Nurses concerning the London Hospital scandals. It is indeed high time.

I should like to make a few remarks concerning last week's correspondence. "John Bull" asks a very pertinent question in desiring to know if the charges are true, and I agree with him that it matters little to the public *who* makes them. All they wish to know is "are they true or false?" From the report I have read of the quarterly court held at the London Hospital on the 3rd inst., it seems the House Committee, in accordance with their usual policy, do not intend to gratify this very natural curiosity. All the same, from the tone adopted by some of the governors present, it is evident that the doings of this "close corporation" are not considered altogether satisfactory.

"E. C." might have made a little more of her good point concerning the conduct of the Press in dealing with the nursing question at the London. The *Daily News* is not the only paper which has published letters, &c., from the "powers that be," and boycotted the other side of the question. I am glad to see, however, that the *Pall Mall* is maintaining its old character as an exposé of abuses and shams, and is giving a hearing to that courageous lady, Mrs. Robert Hunter. A few more women possessed of her singleness of purpose and public spirit amongst the governors of our public Institutions, and the autocracy of officials will be a thing of the past.

To my mind, "Z," has touched on the most grievous matter which was given in evidence before the House of Lords, which still remains unrefuted—that of the large death-rate among the Nurses of the London Hospital. The record stands blazoned on a tablet upon the Hospital Chapel walls. It is to such women as Mrs. Hunter and Miss Yatman, with their love of right and justice, that this tablet will appeal; and I trust that courage and patience will be given them to continue the fight they have so well begun in the cause of humanity. Did they but know the heartfelt gratitude of past Nurses and Sisters who have worked in the London Hospital during the last ten years, they would be encouraged to continue to the inevitable end.—I am, Sir, yours,

A LATE LONDON HOSPITAL SISTER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—I quite agree with your correspondent "John Bull." It is a miserably feeble defence to "abuse the plaintiff's attorney," and it is proverbial that it is only done when there is no other answer to be made. I hope, Sir, you will notice the proceedings at the Governors' meeting at the London Hospital; I send you a copy of the *East London Observer* containing them, by which you will see that the resolution

expressing confidence in the Matron was passed at a meeting of the Committee where only nine of thirty-one members of the Committee were present. Then the Governors were asked to endorse this resolution, although they had no means of knowing both sides of the question because the Blue Book is not published yet. A gentleman, who wished to move an amendment, was not allowed to do so; and a proposal to wait until the Governors knew both sides, before they were asked to express an opinion, was defeated by twenty-three votes to eight. But I want you, Sir, to know that twelve of the twenty-three who voted for pledging of the Governors in the dark were members of the Committee, so that only eleven independent Governors voted for this, as against eight who objected to taking a pig in a poke. I do not think the public will think much of this majority. Most people will think it a moral defeat for the Committee.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. C. RICHARDSON.

[We thank our correspondent, and will notice the matter fully next week.—ED.]

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir—I am sure Nurses will be grateful to you for putting their letters into your paper and not letting our names be known. I was persuaded to go to the London Hospital, and the Matron admitted me on trial, and told me I would have to work for a month without pay, to see if I was fit for a Nurse. I liked the work, but it was very hard; and I was forced to buy something to eat whenever I went out, or I think I should have been starved, because the food given us was badly cooked, and sometimes it was not cooked at all, and the eggs I had there were bad, and the milk nearly always sour, and the bread had hard white lumps in it, or was quite stodgy.

However, I got on very well until after I had been there five weeks, when I thought the Matron must be satisfied, and meant me to be a regular Probationer. But one morning the Sister said to me, "Matron says you won't do, so you had better pack your box and go." I asked why I wouldn't do, but Sister could not say; it was Matron's message, she said. Then I asked to see Matron, but Sister advised me not to do so, but to go quietly. So I said if I couldn't see the Matron I would go straight to the House Governor, because it seemed so queer. Then I was told I could see Matron, and I went to her office, and after waiting an hour in the ante-room I saw her. She told me I was not suitable for a Nurse, but would not say how. She said that I had no right to an opinion on the subject. Then she scolded me for wasting her time, and told me to leave the Hospital at once. I asked the Sisters I had worked under, and they said they had made no complaint of me, and I never saw Matron once in the Wards in the five weeks, so she couldn't know much about me.

But I have heard since I left that many other Nurses are treated just like me, and I think the public should understand what it means. Probationers are taken on trial for a month for no pay, and they are put to do the work of Nurses, and they are generally kept for five or six weeks before they are sent away. Ten women like myself, therefore, do the work of one Nurse for a whole year for no pay, but the ten women go away, as I did, with the injustice rankling. The Hospital saves £12 and sets ten women talking amongst their friends of the injustice at the London Hospital. I suppose it somehow pays somebody to do this, or it would not be done, but I am sure it must be very bad for the reputation of the London Hospital. The strange thing is that the Committee gentlemen evidently know nothing of what is going on and the way the public are talking about them.—Yours respectfully,

ONE OF THE MANY DELUDED TRIAL PROBATIONERS.

[We learn that our correspondent was admitted into a large Hospital and went through her Probationer course with much credit.—ED.]

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