

Gomm, did not distinguish himself in the witness-box. But I must not give more time to this engrossing matter this week, because I must not forget to tell that the Matron made an onslaught on the British Nurses' Association. She must have been surprised to find herself questioned on the subject; and I hope the Association will have the opportunity of making its case public in the most telling way by replying to her attack. Here is the Matron's full opinion concerning the B.N.A., and all the arguments she can bring, be it observed, against the Association.

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"ARE you in favour of what is called the British Nurses' Association for the Registration of Nurses?—No, I think it is a terrible mistake. I think it is doing everything to retard the progress that Nursing has been making." "Why?—It places good and bad Nurses on a level. It is excellent for bad and inefficient Nurses, and fatal to the good ones. Take the test they might apply—it cannot be true that time is the test, or Miss Page would have been a splendid Nurse; or if you think of provincial hospitals, three years in a provincial hospital cannot be compared with six months' experience in a London Hospital—they would see so much more and learn so much more there. Then the theoretical examination, which is another test they might apply, is no guide whatever to the practical fitness of a woman for her work. It is my experience, and that of many other Matrons, that those who come out best in their theoretical examination are not the best fitted for Nursing or for Ward management. You cannot make a Nurse of a woman who has not the gift for nursing any more than you can make a musician of a person who has no ear for music, and no notion of the thing. Then I think that anything which places them all together on a Register like that when you have no distinct, definite, reliable basis must make it more difficult even than it is at present to know whether you can obtain reliable women, or whether the qualifications are imaginary, as it were."

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"Do I understand you to say that you consider the British Nurses' Association, instead of being a protection to the public, to be very much the reverse?—Very much the reverse, for the reasons which I have stated in a pamphlet. And I am not singular in that opinion, for a protest was signed last July by the authorities of nearly all—several at least—the hospitals." (The qualification of this last paragraph is significant.) "Do you think it is no protection to the Nurses themselves?—No, I think not; I think it is very easy for Nurses to get certificates in that way, and be passed off as better Nurses than they are. I have

heard of cases of that. Of course, it sounds plausible, yet it is most misleading; because any Nurse trained at a Hospital ought to be able to refer to her own Hospital as an association. All Hospital bodies of workers are associations in themselves; they are obliged to be, as it were; therefore the Nurse has a natural connection with her own Hospital."

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"You assume that every Nurse must be trained at some Hospital, and therefore you say that such Hospital is the proper place for her to refer to?—Yes; I think also it gives the public the chance of employing all sorts of Nurses, and it is hard that any should be put aside. A Nurse, for instance, trained in a quiet provincial Hospital, if a nice woman, might do for hundreds of cases in private life, and might be more suitable for them than a highly-trained Nurse who only gave her mind fully to what are called interesting cases. Only that when the public pay for a Nurse like that, I think they should know what they are doing, and deliberately choose it. I think there is room for all of them, but I think it should be easy for the public to understand what they are doing."

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THIS is our reporter's verbatim account of the Matron's attack. My only comment is that I have never thought that the Matron understood the question. Now I am convinced that neither she nor anyone else could explain her explanations, as given in her own words.

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AN esteemed subscriber writes me: "I am pleased to hear of the success of Miss Winter, of Saffron Walden; she was the first after yourself to respond to my appeal in the 'Distressing Case.'"

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As a number of Matrons and Nurses have from time to time written me respecting the investment of their savings—in fact I believe I have had nearly seventy communications of the kind since the commencement of the *Nursing Record*, and receive such fairly regularly each week—I have much pleasure in drawing attention to the Birkbeck Building Society and the Birkbeck Bank, 30, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, E.C., as perhaps the best and safest institutions I know, and those interested cannot do better than apply to the office for a report and balance-sheet, which has just been issued, of last year's business.

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I NOTICE that on the occasion of the Hospital Saturday Collection, in aid of the Coventry Hospital, held on the 5th inst., Mrs. Kavanagh (Matron) and the Nursing Staff of the Hospital

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