

facts now before you to withdraw the charges and insinuations you have made.

I am, yours faithfully,

F. J. FRANKAU,
Deputy Treasurer.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick,
Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING,
20, Upper Wimpole St., London, W.
August 5th, 1914.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to thank you for your letter dated August 3rd, and for permission to print your letter of July 27th, marked "Private."

May I be permitted to point out that in your first letter referring to the "undertaking" required from candidates for the matronship of St. George's Hospital, you state that "the only object of the undertaking was that our Matron should devote her whole time to the Hospital, and not take up any time or thought for propaganda (political or social) on one side or the other."

In your second letter you write alluding to your former communication:—"There is not the slightest suggestion in it that we desired to interfere with the personal opinions of any of our staff, on the contrary, all we ask is that they shall not take any 'active' part in any propaganda. The word 'active' implies, of course, the addressing of meetings, canvassing, and the like only, and was, I feel sure, so understood by the candidates." My contention is that in demanding an "undertaking" of the nature under discussion, from the candidates for the matronship of St. George's Hospital, your Selection Committee did "deny personal responsibility of thought and action" to them. In my reply I made no charge or insinuation which is not proved by the above quotation from your letter.

Your Matron was required "not to take up any time or thought for propaganda," and having formed a personal opinion, you denied her the right of "personal responsibility" by depriving her of the right of "action!"

I am pleased to learn, however, that it is not the intention of your committee to carry the "undertaking" to a logical conclusion and to prevent your Matron signing "any petition" in "her private capacity." As your present Matron has been permitted to sign Lord Knutsford's Protest against the State Registration of Nurses, according to his written statement, in her official capacity as "Matron of St. George's Hospital" (see *British Medical Journal*, August 1st, 1914) I would ask that the same liberty of action be extended to her successor.

I must decline to withdraw one word I have written on this subject of such vital importance to the nursing profession at large. Whether you bring my former letter to the notice of the House Committee of St. George's Hospital or not, as you accuse me of dishonourable conduct, both personally and professionally, I shall do myself the justice of publishing the correspondence in full, and I may add that the nursing profession is keenly alive to the danger of the secret

methods of the conduct of business of the Central Hospital Council for London, on which your Committee is represented, in so far as it deals with nursing, and that as this Journal holds a brief for the protection of the personal and professional liberty of "thought" and "action" of trained nurses, it will continue to use its influence to counteract the policy of that autocratic body, which has for the past decade done all in its power to deprive us of such privileges, as evidenced by the drafting of the Official Directory of Nurses Bill, and its introduction into the House of Lords, without consulting the 50,000 working women it proposed to control!

I am, Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

To F. J. Frankau, Esq.,
Deputy Treasurer,
St. George's Hospital, S.W.

A CHINESE PRESCRIPTION.

We are indebted to Miss M. R. Hawkins, Hon. Secretary of the Association of Nursing Superintendents in India, for the following prescription of a Chinese doctor for a case of vomiting. Miss Hawkins assures us that the prescription is genuine:—4 salted lizards (2 male and 2 female), 2 oz. Corea ginseng root, 6 dried grasshoppers (3 male and 3 female), 1 oz. sweet potato stalks, 1 oz. walnuts, 2 oz. lotus leaves, 1½ oz. tail of rattlesnake, 2 oz. black dates, 2 oz. elm tree bark, 1½ oz. hartshorn, ¼ oz. birds' claws, ¼ oz. dried ginger, ½ oz. old coffin nails, ½ oz. devil fish claws. The whole to be mixed with two quarts of water and boiled down to half the quantity. Then tell the patient to drink the mixture as quickly as possible.

THE LAW OF ALLAH.

Not long ago the French Government undertook the collection of vital statistics and general information as to the sanitary status of certain of the European and Asiatic provinces, and for the purpose forwarded to the authorities of these provinces blank forms—questionnaires—accompanied by the usual polite note requesting that the data be supplied thereon and returned to the statistical bureau in Paris.

The pasha of Damascus promptly replied to the questions asked as follows:—

Q. What is the death-rate of your province?

A. It is the law of Allah that all should die—some die young, some die old.

Q. What is the annual number of births?

A. Allah alone can say. I do not know and hesitate to inquire.

Q. Are the supplies of water sufficient and of good quality?

A. From the remotest period of time no one in Damascus has died of thirst.

Q. Give general remarks as to character of local sanitation.

A. A man should not bother himself or his brother with questions that concern only Allah.

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