

stances, and whose bereaved families now subsist on a bare pittance; when every available penny should be spent for their benefit—I say at such a time as this it must strike every nurse who has a spark of pride as both unseemly and out of place that an appeal on her behalf should be made to a generous public for funds that are to include “the millionaire’s cheque and the widow’s mite.” Is the latter to include the war widow and the old age pensioner? The millionaire’s cheque would be more fittingly expended on their behalf.

If nurses are to be regarded as a pauper class, why not relieve them from the rates?

The section of the nursing profession for whom this appeal is primarily made is that engaged in war nursing—women for the most part in the prime of life and selected for their physical fitness. The nation should see to it that they are paid an adequate wage, and not seek to degrade them with unnecessary charity.

Is it proposed that the College of Nursing, Ltd., Endowment Fund shall have the millionaire’s cheque, and the Benevolent Fund the widow’s mite, or vice versa? Or are they to take equal shares? The public ought to have a frank statement of the suggested disposal of the Fund. Is it to be spent for the benefit of trained nurses only, or is it to be shared by the V.A.D.’s, of whom Sir Arthur Stanley, the Chairman of the College, recently said “our endeavour will be to organise the acceptance of the V.A.D.’s by the College of Nursing”?

Yours faithfully,

HENRIETTA HAWKINS.

[As the nurses pay a membership fee of a guinea the College of Nursing should be self-supporting.—ED.]

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE NURSING PROFESSION IN DANGER.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I shall be obliged if you can find space for the following correspondence between the Editor of the *Observer* and myself.

Yours truly,

BEATRICE KENT.

To the Editor of the *Observer*.

Sir,—My letter to the *Observer*, sent to you for publication in last Sunday’s issue, has been returned to me. You have published at great length letters about the College of Nursing Co., Ltd., and the “Nation’s Fund for Nurses.” My letter dealt with the other side of this question. I pointed out to you that certain features of the proposition were contrary to the wishes and the best interests of the nursing profession.

You have received several other letters, expressing the same views as myself, all of which letters (six or seven, I believe) you have declined to publish up to the time of writing. We have not had a better example of the gagged Press for a long time.

The boycott of the Press is one of the worst

evils of our civilization, and I should not have thought that a great paper like the *Observer* would have stooped to such an act of partiality and injustice. The power behind the vote, which will soon be the privilege of women, however, will prove to gentlemen of the press in a manner—which I need not insult your intelligence to explain—that it will no longer be practicable or possible for Reaction to stop the way of Reform.

I remain, yours faithfully,

BEATRICE KENT.

13, Colosseum Terrace,
Regent’s Park, N.W. 1.

Miss Beatrice Kent,

13, Colosseum Terrace,
Regent’s Park, N.W. 1.

Dear Madam,—I return your letter. Your criticisms are quite unwarranted.

Yours faithfully,

The *Observer*,

22, Tudor Street, E.C. 4.

THE EDITOR.

To the Editor of the *Observer*.

Dear Sir,—You tell me in your brief note of November 8th that my criticisms “are quite unwarranted.” I happen to be aware that many letters have been addressed to you on this same subject, namely, the objection of self-respecting educated trained nurses to the impertinence of the British Women’s Hospital Committee in making a public appeal for charity on their behalf, without their consent and very much against their wishes. None of these letters of protest, showing the *other* side, have you published in your columns. My remark was that the “boycott of the Press is one of the worst evils of our civilization,” and I added that “I should not have thought that a great paper like the *Observer* would have stooped to such an act of partiality and injustice.” I repeat my words, because, since you say my criticisms are unwarranted, you must have forgotten what I said and your own action. I can assure you that we do not mean to let this matter drop. As there is no such thing as a Free Press, we intend to make our protest in other ways. We have found poster parading very effectual, and we shall do it again. Let me tell you, Sir, that we do not mean to tolerate this attempt by the laity to control our profession and monopolise our economic independence.

I remain, yours faithfully,

BEATRICE KENT.

[The *Observer*, amongst other papers which have boycotted the trained nurses’ opinions on this question, can find space for whole columns of advertisements from Viscountess Cowdray, the Treasurer of the so-called “Nation’s Fund for Nurses,” which holds us up in *forma pauperis* in the most unprofessional manner, it should surely, in justice, also find space for the opinions of the class who strongly object to this degradation.—ED.]

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