

Apparently an overmastering anxiety to show how widely different he is from such men then seized upon the reviewer, because he proceeds to make this extraordinary statement:—On the very first page of the Register we find the name of a Nurse who had to leave her Hospital for "having in her possession an article belonging to another Probationer." Were such a statement as this to appear in any other journal it would demand the most careful consideration. But the *Hospital* has a peculiar predilection, it appears, for accusing people of theft—in ambiguous language—a partiality upon which we certainly cannot compliment its contributors. And as we have just shown, upon the last occasion when it accused a member of the Royal British Nurses' Association of being a criminal, the assertion was proved to be a malicious and scandalous falsehood. Now it will be observed rather more caution is exhibited, and no name is given.

Mr. Burdett has had the Register, we presume, for some three weeks, and we cannot doubt that if he could have discovered damaging facts concerning it he would gladly have catalogued every one of them. It is therefore immensely to the credit of the Registration Board that he has been obliged to content himself with this one instance, and a violent attack upon the Superintendent of the Bond Street Nursing Institution, which that estimable and much-respected lady will doubtless know how to meet, but which, by its absolute irrelevance, proves the weakness of his onslaught upon the Register.

Now let us briefly consider the worst and only fact which can be advanced against this volume by its most violent critic—that it contains the name of a Nurse who had to leave her Hospital for "having in her possession an article belonging to another Probationer." This is afterwards described as "a most serious fault," and then in another place it is hinted that it was *theft*—this word being italicised. Now this matter is very simple and easily decided. Mr. Henry C. Burdett has permitted a statement to be made in the journal of which he is the Editor, and for which, therefore, he is responsible legally and morally. Does he mean to say that the woman in question is a thief? If not the whole of the tirade is merely vapid nonsense. If he does mean that she is a thief her address is given, and we desire to know why she has not been arrested and tried upon the criminal charge.

It is stated that she "had to leave her Hospital" for conduct which Mr. Burdett implies amounted

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to crime. Fortunately there are only very few names upon the first page of the Register, and if the Registration Board does not do so, we shall have the pleasure of testing the facts of this statement a little further. What we shall require to know is, what is the name of the Nurse to whom our contemporary so evasively alludes, evidently warned by its last attempt to designate a criminal? What was the Hospital from which she was discharged? Then supposing she "had to leave" for theft, the Committee will have to explain to the public how it came to pass that it took the serious step of condoning a criminal offence. We should, however, not be surprised to find that the Nurse in question was entirely innocent of the crime attributed to her, and indeed was unaware that such an accusation had ever been made against her. We shall make it our business, however, to find out the truth of this story, for it appears to us for many reasons to be highly improbable.

We fear that the Registration Board cannot be expected to take the matter up. We can imagine the amused astonishment with which—if they hear of it—they will learn that Mr. Henry C. Burdett has furnished the public with the most excellent proof of the absolute necessity of the work in which they are engaged. We frankly confess that our observation of Mr. Henry C. Burdett's career has not inspired us with a very exalted opinion either of his temper or his talents. Two or three times he has hysterically hurled a letter from his solicitor at our heads, and each time he has hastily retired into silence. He has never lost an opportunity of expressing his opposition to the Royal British Nurses' Association, and has merely succeeded in advertising it and its objects to an extent which unaided it could never have hoped for. He has opposed Registration so violently that its success in attracting public attention and support has been quite phenomenal. Now he goes out of his way to show how absolutely valueless private Hospital Registers are for the protection of the public, and the enormous value of a published general Register for the detection of improper characters, and their removal from the ranks of the calling. The only further service he can render the Association is to give it an opportunity of drawing public attention to the manner in which it has been vilified and persecuted, and so to bring to its support all true and honourable men in the United Kingdom.

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