



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(Notes, Queries, &amp;c.)

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

We shall be happy to answer, as far as we can, all questions submitted to us.

Communications, &c., not noticed in our present number will receive attention when space permits.

## NURSES' OPPONENTS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—I, with many Private Nurses that I know, am sincerely grateful to you for supporting Nurses at this crisis—in the inevitable struggle for justice and independence. As a class, we have too long been the mere "goods and chattels" of the employers of Nursing labour, and now that, like the proverbial worm, we have dared to turn, we are to be dictated to by "his Grace the Duke of Westminster" and his colleague Chairmen of Nurse Training School Committees, who know absolutely nothing of Nursing politics, and who can hardly be aware that for years a keen sense of injustice to the conditions under which Nurses work "under their guidance" has been gradually strengthening amongst Nurses of all classes. I am a Certificated Nurse of seven years' experience, and I have to compete in the Nursing labour market with inexperienced women who are certificated by the Westminster Hospital authorities at the end of one year's work in that small Hospital, so that they may be sent out to nurse the better classes, and so earn money for the charity. It appears to me that the Duke of Westminster, as Chairman of the Hospital, would be acting more honourably towards the public, and certainly more generously towards the Nurses, if he put aside a few hundreds from his enormous rent roll to pay for the thorough education of the Probationers at the Westminster Hospital, and also to see that when trained they receive just salaries, instead of the miserable pittance at present bestowed upon them. If it had not been for the generous support of your most valuable paper the Nurses would have no voice at all.—I remain, yours faithfully,

A CERTIFICATED PRIVATE NURSE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—May I, through the medium of your excellent paper, venture to warn some of my colleagues against the danger of losing self-control in their arguments at this critical period of our fight against injustice and oppression? We must keep cool and stick to our guns. As a "Hospital Sister" says, "We know what we want." That is a very sure starting point, but do not let us be weak enough to imagine that we shall gain what we want without opposition. "One man's meat is another man's poison," and the thoroughly Trained, Certificated, Registered Nurse will not be the defenceless, dependent domestic drudge, which has in the past proved so "amenable to reason," and such a lucrative source of income to the authorities of "Nurse Training Schools." Believe me the London Hospital and its companions in Nurse sweating, have seen their palmy days; I doubt if ever again they will net a profit of £1,200 in one year out of the work of their employees. We are winning all along the line; let us have patience. Nothing can be more inspiring nor more

true than the words uttered by Sir William Savory at the meeting on the 16th ult. He said, "I am rejoiced at the opposition which the Association has met, because opposition is inevitable to all progress, but it must ultimately enlarge our success. It is most fortunate to have these difficulties to encounter, we are determined to triumph over them. Those who oppose the movement might as well attempt to stem the rising tide."—Yours truly,

ONE OF THE BULL-DOG TYPE.

## THE REIGN OF KING SLANDER.

"SPEAK THE TRUTH AND SHAME THE DEVIL."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir.—It is quite refreshing to see so many of your contributors and correspondents inquiring after the truth, an oasis in the weary desert, a beautiful rose in the midst of thorns. And it is to be hoped that they will keep up the same until all the wrongs which now exist in the nursing profession are set right.

But I have an ulterior motive in writing this, viz., to congratulate "Old Jonathan" upon speaking out about "characters" and "damning clauses." For really our enemies are those *within* our ranks, not without them; as indeed some of these are enough to charm the devil. And I am alluding particularly to our leaders, so called, those "perfect" Matrons and Committees whose names are legion, who, as soon as they get into power, are using it to damn our Nurses' characters away; for as long as this autocratic despotism is allowed to go on unchecked—and it has had a long reign—no Registers can be of any earthly use to us. MATRONAGE has its duties, as well as its privileges. Never mind the name, as long as our Matrons and Committees will persist in introducing those *damning clauses* in writing to one's referees, which no ordinary mortal could understand or reply to, there should be no hesitation about drawing their caricatures lest some of them might recognise their own portraits.

But there, there must be no mincing matters now. Let us close in upon our Matrons and Committees everywhere, request them to wash their own hands in innocence, pick no holes in either our Probationers' or Nurses' coats, but simply do *their own* duty; and then, but not till then, can we raise the clarion cry to the entire Nursing army with every confidence. Mr. Pedantry excepted, I do not believe in the so-called "incompetence" of Nurses, neither in the "perfection" of Matrons and Committees; we are all too young yet to be analysed in this way. Then just let those Matrons and Committees put that cupidity and arbitrariness of theirs in their pockets (glorify me), turn their attention to the practical and common-sense "ethics of life" a little more, and as "The Yorkshireman" very pithily expresses it, they'll have "no time for preaching." He has hit awfully hard, struck the keynote in fact, about *definiteness* in one's aims; and all those leaders who are saying literally, though not perhaps in so many words, "Stand off, for I am holier than thou," deserve a jolly good hiding. A wise man has said, "Do not slander, that ill-fame and wickedness may not come to thee therefrom; for it is said that every other demon attacks in the front, but Slander assaults from behind."—Watching by

MY STUDY WINDOW.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—In Saturday's *Times* I read another attack upon the Royal British Nurses' Association, signed by several Chairmen of London Hospital Committees, and I must beg for space to make a few remarks concerning the nursing arrangements of the Hospitals under their "guidance." I will begin with Westminster, as "his grace" heads the list. The standard of what is a Trained Nurse is lower at the Westminster Hospital than any Hospital in London, as, unlike the larger nursing schools, it certifies its Probationers as *trained* at the end of one year, and sends them out as such,

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