

## THE ECONOMIC SUBJUGATION OF THE NURSING PROFESSION.

The pauperisation of the "Nation's Nurses" goes on apace. Viscountess Cowdray, Dame Webster, and their committee of actresses and young society women, are determined to buy them up lock, stock, and barrel, and present them as a gift to Sir Arthur Stanley. Huge sums are being spent weekly in the advertising columns of the *Times*, *Telegraph*, *Observer*, and the lesser Northcliffe newspaper lights, and the letterpress of these publications is closed to the protests of the members of the Nursing Profession, who realise the danger to their economic independence through the subsidisation of the College of Nursing Company and lay control. As the subsidised newspapers exclude Nursing Opinion, the Trained Nurses' Protection Committee distributed leaflets at the two entertainments organized by the British Women's Hospital Committee last week, protesting against methods which have stifled free discussion in the press.

### ENTERTAINMENT No. 1.

On Friday, February 8th, there was a show in support of the dumb "Nation's Nurses" at the West End Cinema Theatre, at which Adeline Duchess of Bedford presided, when the charity scheme was supported by Mr. Pett Ridge, Miss Musson, R.R.C., Miss Elizabeth Asquith, and by some extraordinary freak of policy, by Mr. Ben Tillett, M.P.

This pronounced trade-unionist would have done well to enquire from the Trained Nurses' Organized Societies *their* point of view before associating himself with duchesses, plutocratic pecesses, and actresses in their unjustifiable and dangerous interference with the economic condition of the working members of the nursing profession. Imagine the situation if the appeal had been made for self-respecting industrial men, and we think Mr. Ben Tillett, M.P., will realise that in advocating charity for working women amidst a bevy of patronesses, he was violating the basic principles for which he presumably stands as the secretary of Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and the General Workers Union of Great Britain and Ireland. We can but think his aristocratic associates had gravely misrepresented the feelings of the rank and file of the Nursing Profession of which they are fully aware, in inducing this pioneer organizer of the Rights of Labour to advocate for trained nurses humiliating conditions he would repudiate for skilled, self-respecting working men. Let us hope Mr. Ben Tillett, M.P., will be found supporting the right of trained nurses to self-supporting, economic conditions through the Nurses' Registration Bill. He must know that nothing but dishonour and dependence can result from the patronage of leisured persons who have never earned a penny in their lives.

### ENTERTAINMENT No. 2.

A song recital was given at the Æolian Hall in support of the Subjugation of Nurses Fund, on Saturday, February 9th.

Members of the Nurses' Protection Committee distributed literature condemning the Press boycott of the opinion of the Nation's Nurses on their own professional affairs. At both entertainments the programmes made use of the names as patrons of Her Majesty the Queen and Her Majesty Queen Alexandra, ranging these Royal ladies as supporters of the Charity Fund, so strongly resented by the organized nurses' societies. As this is both a political and economic question and will be fought out as such in the Houses of Parliament, we are of opinion that the use of the names of Their Majesties by the B.W.H. Committee is unjustifiable and specially unpatriotic in these Bolshevik days. So long as the British Women's Hospital Committee acted as a benevolent fund for our sick and wounded sailors and soldiers, —the *raison d'être* of its existence—Royal patronage was in order, but now that it is ranged on the side of the nurses' employers in their demand to control the worker, and has been informed that the worker does not intend to submit to financial, political and professional suppression, it is time the Royal Family understood that the British Women's Hospital Committee is now a political and not a philanthropic agency.

## PAINT, PEARLS AND PATRONAGE.

BY AN INTERESTED OBSERVER.

I had some time on my hands while I waited for a friend, so I wandered up and down Coventry Street, Piccadilly. My attention was arrested by an advertisement in large type, proclaiming the fact that an entertainment would be given that afternoon at the West End Cinema in aid of the "Nation's Fund for Nurses," the entertainment to be preceded by speeches in support of the same object. I further learned that this charitable appeal was being made by the British Women's Hospital Committee. While I wondered what had become of the British self-respect of British nurses who could allow themselves to be made objects of charity—especially during a world tragedy of such magnitude—two ladies approached from opposite directions and greeted each other cordially. Then, taking up positions on either side of the door, they began distributing leaflets to the supporters of the charity as they passed in. I held out my hand. "I hope it will interest you, Sir." "Thank you, I think it will," I replied, as I caught sight of the words in heavy type, "British Women's Hospital Committee and the Subjugation of the Nursing Profession." A protest, I discovered, as I read it thoughtfully, and with relief, to find that the great Profession which is doing and suffering in this war, has not lost its self-respect after all. Pocketing the leaflets, I listened with double interest and silent applause to the following dialogues between the two ladies—who appeared to be nurses themselves—and those who passed into the hall:—

*Nurse A.*—"We resent being pauperised; we don't want charity, madam."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)