

nurse? I myself shall act as Matron—*don't send a dragon*; our V.A.D.s are very efficient.'

"I want a trained nurse to take the lead; but I prefer she should not be called Matron, as our duties might clash."

Trained nurse writes: "Please recall me from this hospital. I am the only trained nurse, and have to be on call at night for fear the V.A.D. on duty requires help; moreover the Commandant arranges all off duty times and I never know who will be on duty from hour to hour."

"I have been Matron in two Red Cross Hospitals, and the Commandants have both been awarded the R.R.C. 'Where do the nurses come in?' And so on by the yard; the system is wrong.—ED.]

FREEDOM OF SPEECH BY UP-TO-DATE METHODS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—As the "Free Press" is *not* free, we, independent freedom-loving members of the nursing profession, having proved on various occasions that posters in the open streets are a most effectual method of protest, sallied forth (those of us who had time) on November 26th, adorned with posters bearing the following words: "Dancing on the Dead—Patriotic Nurses protest against money being raised in their name by a 'Victory Ball,' before our splendid men are cold in their graves." We walked up and down in front of the Automobile Club (now being used for overseas officers) and the offices of the British Red Cross Society. The hour and the place favoured our enterprise. It was a scene of ceaseless activity, of coming and going of the military and civic population of men and women. Eyes, which were opened wide, were expressive of many emotions: scorn, amusement, indifference, anger, kindness and sympathy.

Civilian: "I admire you for coming out to protest in such a manner. It is more fitting at this time to be on our knees with thankfulness than to dance."

Poster Paraders: "Thank you, sir, for your sympathy" (with a few more words of enlightenment).

Officer (reading thoughtfully): "Oh, I thought this ball was under the auspices of the Red Cross Society."

This remark illustrates in the clearest manner the wrong done by the promoters of the "Victory Ball," in using this sacred symbol to cover their advertisement for a purpose which has no connection whatever with it. Have not Britons often bewailed indignantly the Huns' *misuse of the Red Cross*? The difference is only one of degree, not of principle.

We made our explanations to the officer who left us an enlightened man.

A Lady: "What is this protest?"

We explained. She showed sympathy and understanding.

Porter of Automobile Club: "A lady inside says you must not stand here."

We! We do not recognise her authority; we intend to remain, and we *did*!

A POSTER PARADER.

JUSTICE NOT CHARITY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—My attention has been drawn to Sir Arthur Stanley's reply to the protest issued by the Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association and the President of the Society for the Statutory Registration of Trained Nurses, &c., &c. The protest is a valuable one, and Sir A. Stanley's remarks about these societies are *not* correct and also appear to be very ungentlemanly.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick has represented the Nursing Profession for many years. She has consistently pressed for State Registration of Nurses and for better salaries. She is indeed a "Pioneer" in their cause. She has exceptional knowledge of nurses and their status and salaries. It is a well-known evil that trained nurses have always been paid insufficiently in institutions of all kinds, having regard to the skilled work they are required to undertake. They *do not ask for charity*; they *ask for justice*, and one hopes that with the "new order" of things, viz., the Women's Vote in the future, they will attain this.

Yours faithfully,

DORA H. COLMAN,

Commandant "Surrey 100."

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Disgusted Private Nurse: My patient is still in danger, but both mother and daughter attended the Victory Ball. Nothing was discussed but fancy dress for days, and a sum which would have kept a sick soldier for a year, or taught him a trade was lavished on their get up. They were simply furious at the Nurses' Protest in the Press (guilty conscience as one son was killed in the war). As you know, my dear brother is still missing and all this frivolity in *our name* is most hurtful. I had a good cry over it."

"A Nurse" writes: "I went to 52, North Audley Street to make a protest against the Victory Ball. Whilst in the shop, someone dressed in a Red Cross uniform (with white shoes and stockings) asked the saleswoman if men in evening dress would be admitted, and it was suggested to her 'the man might borrow khaki!'"

"Military Nurse": "Here Victory Ball tickets were sent to the Mess and young officers were urged to buy them by the colonel, who had had them sent for disposal—'for a good cause, our broken-down military nurses,' as he explained. What a shame to make these young men waste £3 3s., even over us broken old war nurses! Also Sisters and nurses in this hospital are told by the Matron they must join the College *or it will be most serious for their future*, and they may pay the guinea in instalments. How about Kaiserism? Is our boasted liberty all 'pot-calling-kettle'?"

[We regret to hold over a number of interesting letters.—ED.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)