

**WE SHALL RESIST "FORCE."**

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—Someone has kindly sent me a copy of your paper, which generally happens when I am abused in it—so I get quite a number of copies from time to time.

It would be rather difficult to reply in even temper to your leading article if I were not hardened to being misrepresented by you. But lest any of your readers should feel, with you, that they need protection against "the gratuitous insults and domination of men of the type of Lord Knutsford," will you allow me to say that you have put a totally wrong construction on what I said. I said that, as no agreement could be come to between the supporters of the two Bills, a Council would have to be forced on Nurses which would carry the confidence of Nurses after the first sore feeling had passed off. This remark applied equally to both sides. Neither side will get, as far as I can judge, what they want, and will, therefore, be obliged, or forced, to accept something they do not altogether like. Is not this pretty obvious? We all have to do this sometimes, even those who oppose Registration!

It is not my "despotic will" which is to be forced on anyone. I have had nothing to do with the College Bill or with the College. I am only quite sure that the majority of Nurses are in favour of the College Bill, and not of the Bill promoted by Societies, several of which are run by one and the same people whose names appear over and over again, now in one position, now in another; and the names of the members of which are, certainly in the case of the "Matrons' Council," a wisely preserved secret.

Yours faithfully,

KNUTSFORD.

[We know our Lord Knutsford far too well to quote his unreported verbal utterances, and, although in supporting the College Bill in the Lords, we heard him speak; the words criticised in our Editorial last week, we carefully quoted them word for word from Hansard's Official Report of the Parliamentary Debates of Tuesday, May 27th, 1919, column 839. The statement to which we took strong exception is as follows:—"You cannot get agreement, but you may get a Council forced upon them," that is, forced upon the nurses who object to the autocratic lay control provided for in the College Bill to which Lord Knutsford petitioned his peers to give a second reading, and which, supported by other hospital chairmen, the Lords proceeded to do.

Lord Knutsford, who says he has nothing to do with the College, is sure the majority of nurses are in favour of the College Bill, and we are equally sure that not one College nurse in a hundred has ever read either Bill. Knowing from the commercial nursing press the fate of any Matron or Nurse who dares to co-operate for professional independence, the majority of nurses meekly place their names on the College Register, because the Matron, pushed by the Committee, urges her to do so, and

because promotion depends on acquiescence—a vicious circle indeed!

The personal attacks of Lord Knutsford in and out of the press on women members of the Matrons' Council and other nurses' organisations are as contemptible as they are unchivalrous, but apparently "noblesse oblige" is not obligatory on the new aristocracy.

But we pioneers of State Registration like not the threat of "force" in any form whatever, and we give fair warning of unflinching resistance if any attempt is made by Parliament to place us under the control of the College oligarchy of hospital officials, who have no more right to govern the Nursing Profession than the nurses have to interfere with the Bar Council, the professional authority of the profession to which Lord Knutsford belonged.

When Lord Knutsford ceases to "preserve secret" the receipts and expenditure of the very lucrative Private Nurse Farm he conducts at the London Hospital, it will be time for him to demand information concerning Nurses' organisations which are free from his "despotic will."  
—[Ed.]

**WISDOM, JUSTICE, ENTHUSIASM PROVE MORAL STRENGTH.**

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—When Lord Amptill, in his speech in the House of Lords, denounced that particular clause in the College Bill which states that every nurse on the general register would be "entitled" to become a member of the College of Nursing, he drew attention to an important point which, in my opinion, reflects against the soundness of the present membership of the College of Nursing, Ltd. They hereby admit that registration and membership of the College of Nursing, Ltd., are two different things.

Some of us would be interested to know how many of the nurses they claim as "members" in support of their Bill have paid any subscription, apart from the guinea registration fee.

It really is time the College of Nursing, Ltd., stated the number and calling of their actual "supporters," when they presume to compare their strength with that of societies which depend upon annual subscriptions from members who support the principles they uphold.

What kind of "support" is it which has to depend upon flag-days, bazaars, and all the usual supplications which go hand-in-hand with charitable enterprise?

The wisest nurses are undoubtedly those who "pay the piper and call their own tune." Their present demand is for justice.

Qualities such as wisdom, justice and enthusiasm are not to be judged by numerical strength; yet they represent moral strength and inevitably result in moral force.

Yours faithfully,

THERESA McGRATH.

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