

PERSISTENT MENDACITY.

We own to a slight shock when we overheard a noble Lord corrected in his own "House," when speaking of the College of Nursing a nurse chipped in and called it "the College of Lies!" Not that we differed from her estimate of the veracity of many of its partisans, but because all truths are not to be told at all times.

But, really, when we took up the recent copy of *The Royal Free Hospital Nurses' League Journal*, we could not help pitying the members of that League in being so purposely misinformed and misled. We do not know who is responsible for editing this publication, but whoever she is, she is unworthy of the responsibility!

First of all, these misguided nurses are told: "As we go to press, the Central Committee's Bill has been withdrawn on the Report Stage." This is not true; the Central Committee's Bill has not been withdrawn, and is still before Parliament; the scheme of the College of Nursing—to introduce its own Bill into the House of Lords and use every effort to have the Central Committee's Bill withdrawn, so that it would have a clear course in the Commons—has, of course, been resisted by Major Barnett, and those whose considered opinions he represents, and quite rightly so.

Then Royal Free Nurses are told that "the Minister of Health further stated (in the House of Commons) that the Government would bring in a Bill of their own at the earliest date possible, and which would deal with Registration only, leaving all such questions as education and conditions of employment to be considered in another manner."

The Minister of Health made no such statement in the House of Commons, as the official reports of the Parliamentary Debates prove. No professional Registration Act can be of the least value which does not empower the Governing Body (the General Nursing Council) to define and supervise educational standards, as the Medical and the Midwives Acts do, and hold a central examination before registration.

"The position quite briefly, therefore, is," says the misleading editor of *The Royal Free Hospital Nurses' League Journal*, "that at the present moment both Bills are dead." Why "at the present moment"? The dead do not arise in this non-miraculous age, and the Central Committee's Bill will only cease to exist with the Session, in Parliamentary order. What cataleptic phases the rival College Bill may be feigning to gain its unworthy ends, we know not—neither do we care.

THE TWO BILLS.

An article also appears in the Journal headed "The Two Bills," signed "L. G. B." and it is after reading this malicious misrepresentation of the provisions of the Central Committee's Bill, that the description of "a College of Lies" recurred to our memory.

This article begins with the silly deductions from the Memorandum of the Central Committee's Bill, but does not repeat the lie circulated by the College Council and Miss Ferrier, that the membership of the affiliated nurses' societies only amounts to 4,000, when well aware that upwards of 15,000 nurses have supported these organisations, in spite of the tyrannical opposition of the Training-Schools and the majority of their Matrons to free co-operation amongst trained nurses; and to boast of the nurse-membership of the College is merely to prove that 14,000 trained nurses—the majority under Training-School control—have signed the College Serf-Clause, agreeing to be removed from membership and its Register *without power of appeal*; thus proving themselves not only devoid of self-respect and professional responsibility, but a positive danger to the liberties of their colleagues, who decline to place themselves in a position so degrading—not only professionally, but humanly. Give us an intelligent minority of self-respecting human beings, as the affiliated members of the Central Committee are, to a whole flock of woolly sheep who are content to be sheared and shepherded by every class of exploiter.

Then we have an attack upon the Matrons' Council, and these pioneers of every nursing reform accomplished in the past quarter-of-a-century, are compared to the timorous time-servers, who have promoted a rival Matrons' Association, and who have opposed registration and all it stands for, at the dictation of their committees; and now, when the battle is won, rush in again by the permission of their lay controllers, to attempt to grab the fruits of their colleagues' devoted work for the public good. Personally we have no use for women of this type, and advise "L. G. B." to read nursing history in the hope that she may feel some sense of shame in attempting to blacken the reputations of women, "the latchet of whose shoes she is not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

"THE BIGGEST BANG."

But the biggest lie of the lot is the repetition of the statement first floated by Miss Rundle in the *Evening Standard* that the amendment making possible the registration of nurses without training was promoted by the Central Committee. "L. G. B." states that the "Central Committee's Bill has a dangerous clause that states 'any person, who, within three years from the commencement of the Act, produces satisfactory evidence to the Council of having been for at least three years in a *bona fide* practice as a nurse in attendance on the sick, as to the conditions under which she was so engaged may claim to be registered.' And it is the promoters of this Bill who say that the College is out to register the V.A.D.!" exclaims this perverter of the truth, who quotes the Government amendment to the Bill, well knowing it is not and never has been in the Central Committee's Bill. Apparently "L. G. B." makes the above statement to incite Royal Free nurses against the pioneer Bill.

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