

Those who look at nursing solely from the money point of view must remember that it is only the few who rise to eminence, and occupy high positions in any walk of life, that the majority of mankind are the rank and file, but with the facilities now offered by free education, scholarships, etc., there are more opportunities for everyone, nursing being no exception.

Yours truly,

REBECCA STRONG, F.B.C.N.,  
President, S.N.A.

17, Woodburn Terrace, Edinburgh.

### KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

#### The Nursing Profession Bill.

The Bill for laying down the wages and hours of Nurses, if passed, is going to create a large number of law breakers, for no Nurse can nurse her patient and obey the law. I have noticed in all discussions on the conditions under which nurses work, etc., there is always one opinion absent, that of the patient, an opinion most important. Would the sick patient like three, instead of two different personalities imposed upon him during the twenty-four hours; what would be the effect on a highly-strung, delirious patient when each time he regained a little consciousness to have a different nurse attending on him? I see a number of letters from nurses advocating the Bill on the account of higher wages and greater advantages. The conditions of nursing are improving and will continue to improve, but drastic alterations cannot be made in a profession which still demands other motives than merely that of money-making from those women who enter it. Nursing is a profession, not a trade, and those who enter any profession have to make sacrifices in some shape or form, ask medical women, actresses, novelists, etc.

MARY S. COCHRANE, S.R.N., F.B.C.N.

The Nursing Profession (Wages and Hours) Bill is intolerable! It ignores the charm of nursing, and high ideals are no longer permitted to be carried into action. The nurse is robbed of opportunities of extending sympathy towards the suffering and prevented from giving extra comfort she is longing to give, for time is up and reluctantly she must "down tools" and claim her too liberal off duty time or partake of refreshment.

The passing into law of such a Bill must be an obstacle for the State Registered Nurse, and a stepping-stone for the unregistered or partially trained nurse. Is this the goal for which we fought our way through stony and rough paths to procure State Registration? The State Registered Nurse will be at a disadvantage not being free to act or even be merciful, whereas the unregistered nurse will still have the privilege of carrying on her work in the true uplifting spirit of nursing. Who, loving her work, could bear with such degrading legislation?

RHODA METHERELL, S.R.N., F.B.C.N.

In my opinion, the proposals contained in the "Nursing Profession Bill" relating to hours and wages, if carried into effect will make it almost impossible for our hospitals to carry on their work to the extent to which it is being carried on to-day.

The number of working hours suggested in the Bill would necessitate the engagement of many additional nurses and more frequent changing of staff in the wards, which from the patients' point of view, is, I think, inadvisable, especially during the daytime when most attention is necessary.

The remuneration suggested for probationers is, in my opinion, too high. It must be taken into consideration

that they are acquiring a specialised knowledge to become members of a profession from which at a later date it is possible to derive a good livelihood.

The hours and conditions as specified in the Act are not, as far as I can ascertain, desired by the Nursing Profession as a body.

CONSTANCE L. KEYS-WELLS, S.R.N., F.B.C.N.  
Matron, Croydon General Hospital.

MADAM,—The backers of this Bill are all of one class of politicians only, I see, namely Socialists calling themselves "Labour," and not one of them, I will wager, knows a single thing about the State Registered Nursing Profession. If they did, they would know that we have our own Governing Body under the Act who are endowed with the necessary powers. These ignorant backers, who do not appear to have given any thought to the wishes of the members of the Profession, or—and this is the most important point—to realise, that the conditions governing the Nursing Profession, are essentially different to those of any other Profession. Ever since the present Government came into Office, they have been steadily engaged in throwing people out of work by their maladministration, so this mischievous Bill is in accordance with their methods; and if the Bill were to pass into law, the Nurses in many cases (certainly those engaged in private nursing) would lose their employment, and their patients would suffer neglect and inconvenience. The best lesson for these interfering M.P.s would be that each one of them should require the services of a nurse, and when she was most needed, she should down tools! Of course, I wrote to my M.P. to protest.—BEATRICE KENT.

It does not seem possible to picture a more outrageous situation than that a Bill affecting the whole life and well-being of our Profession should have been drafted without a single consultation with any Registered Nurses' Organisation.

Are the Legislators in question so ignorant that they did not know any existed? Certainly no one with knowledge or right understanding of the Nursing Profession could have drafted such a Bill. It seems an extraordinary thought to penalise the sick, for that is what this Bill means as well as degrading a splendid Profession.

The salary question also is badly thought out. Why pay a pupil such a high salary and by comparison the nurse such a small one? Such a plan could only lead to a shortage of the kind of nurse most needed and wanted by the sick, for whose benefit we primarily enter the Profession. It would not only affect the sick but would very seriously injure the nurse—who we suppose Mr. Brockway in his ignorance thought he was helping—if this Bill were passed.

Yours faithfully,

EMILY J. HASWELL, S.R.N., M.B.C.N.

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### PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR MAY.

What do you understand by infection? By what means are infectious diseases transmitted? Give an example.

We regret we are unable to award a prize this month, no paper of sufficient merit having been received.

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