

A REMARKABLE PROPOSITION.

Under the heading "Doctor's Queer Health Institute," *John Bull*, in its issue of October 3rd, publishes an article by Sir Wyndham Childs, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.M.G., J.P., which should command serious attention, for the author holds a distinguished record for war and other public services, and, moreover, was Assistant Commissioner of Metropolitan Police from 1921 to 1928.

Prefacing his article by the statement that "Questions of diet, nutrition and food reform are always calculated to attract widespread interest, which is why they figure so frequently in new projects that appeal for public support," Sir Wyndham Childs proceeds to say: "One of the most remarkable propositions of the kind that I have ever encountered is outlined in a circular letter that is now being sent out broadcast, and about which I have received a number of enquiries. It is addressed principally to the matrons of hospitals in London and the provinces and carries the heading, 'National Institute of Nutrition, 64 Great Cumberland Place, London.'

"The signature to the letter is: J. Neil Leitch, M.D., M.R.C.P. (London), D.P.H., D.T.M. and H. (Eng.)."

Then follows the letter which, as we are aware, has been received by many matrons and others, offering a thorough training for a year in dietetics to State Registered Nurses, in a new institution of 200 beds, "which will become, in effect, the first dietetic hospital in this country."

Members were to make their own arrangements for board and lodging for the first six months and pay the college three guineas a month for the same period.

Sir Wyndham Childs writes that "With such a broadcast, it is only right, in the public interest, full enquiry should be made into the origin of this scheme.

"Consulting my records, I find that they contain information that is of exceptional interest. In the early part of the year *John Bull* carried a reference to the London College of Dietetics, of 64, Great Cumberland Place, of which Dr. Leitch was the 'permanent principal,' at a salary of not less than £400 a year, with the addition of an unfurnished flat of not less than three living rooms.

"Students in dietetics were accepted by this 'college' at fees of fifty guineas a year."

Sir Wyndham Childs then gives examples of some of the students who "paid over their good money to this 'college' and discovered that the tuition they received was of little value."

He instances the case of a young widow, left in straitened circumstances by the death of her husband, who pawned her jewellery to provide the means for a course at the London College of Dietetics, whose experience was disastrous; and the case of "three registered nurses who went to the college and after an experience of the curriculum left the place in despair. They endeavoured to obtain a refund on their fees, but failed.

"There was also a suggestion that students would be sent for practical experience to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Again an undertaking which was not carried out."

"On the advertising literature was an imposing list issued by the college of distinguished men and women nominated as 'members of the Advisory Committee.'

"A number of these people wrote to Dr. Leitch, withdrawing from any connection with his college. Yet, even after those definite instructions, the college continued to use their names to attract pupils. One name thus used was that of a world-famous English physician. . . . Eventually a solicitor had to take steps to ensure the omission of the name.

"Records show that this college was owned by a small

private company, under the style of the London College of Dietetics, Ltd.

"I understand," says Sir Wyndham Childs, "that this company is now in financial difficulty. According to the file at Somerset House, both directors have resigned, and no new appointments have been notified."

The former chairman of the company, Sir Leon Levison, has also resigned.

"Now," says Sir Wyndham Childs, "the London College of Dietetics has become merged in the larger National Institute of Nutrition, of which Dr. Leitch is the head.

"He is endeavouring to secure subscriptions for membership of this institute as well as pupils for instruction.

"Dr. Leitch appears to be particularly anxious to obtain financial support from the general public.

"A little while ago, at his lectures, he was soliciting monetary aid for the 'National Health Trust Fund,' which had the same office address as the London College of Dietetics and the National Institute of Nutrition.

"The different concerns—for they are only that—run from 64, Great Cumberland Place, are," says Sir Wyndham Childs, "in my view, open to the strongest criticism. All of them should be left alone."

He concludes: "In fairness to another organisation, it should be stated that Dr. Leitch's London College of Dietetics and National Institute of Nutrition is in no way connected with the London School of Dietetics."

Our readers will agree that Sir Wyndham Childs has done public service in drawing attention to these matters. We would advise nurses to make a practice of obtaining professional advice before paying considerable sums of money in fees for instruction which may prove of no value.

The article in *John Bull* is illustrated by a portrait of Dr. Leitch with the caption, "Dr. Leitch—famous people are eager to dissociate themselves from his affairs."

WORD FOR THE MONTH.

Doctor as "Patient's Sanctuary."

"The doctor is a sanctuary, and the patient is to be protected not only against death and pain, but also against the quack who would batten on his infirmities, against his friends and, too often, against himself."

* * *

The relationship between doctor and patient was unique, and only after years of experience could the doctor begin to appreciate what this relationship could mean in human affairs.

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"The doctor must be able to utilise to a greater extent certain of the faculties which are common to all. The whole of a doctor's experience of humanity must be focussed on his patient. He must, as it were, be able to withdraw into the patient, taking his experience with him."

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"If the doctor was of necessity a humanist in former generations, it behoves him to be all the more a humanist to-day."

Lord Horder on "The Doctor as Humanist."

THE TRANSFER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF LONDON UNIVERSITY.

During the vacation the transference of the administrative staff of London University to their new and permanent home in Bloomsbury took place.

What must always give to the University of London its unique and permanent value is the freedom of the individual colleges to grow and develop in the expression of their own spiritual and intellectual destinies.

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