

Though the statement does not appear in the report of the trial from the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* which you print, Miss McLelland, however, did confess, in the course of the trial, that she was sorry for having written the letter in question. She admitted that she had always liked Nurse Belsey, and that she liked her still, and reference was made to another letter she had written previously to Miss Barnfather, in which she thanked her for sending "so kind and considerate a Nurse" as Miss Belsey had proved to be. Miss McLelland, too, at the close of the trial, through the Counsel engaged, offered either to take Miss Belsey back, or to create an opening for her elsewhere. These are facts which indicate how unfair it would be to attach any serious importance to the charges of "silliness" and "stupidity" made in the letter written under the circumstances described.

You may be perfectly right in your contention that private nursing institutions are a mistake, but the selection of Miss Belsey to prove this is about the most unfortunate that could have been made, for those who have had the best opportunities of judging of her fitness and capacity have characterised her as a "born nurse." Her connection previously with the Manchester Southern Hospital was of a most honourable character, and though she left that institution after five months' service, through a breakdown in health, the Matron, Miss Anstey, sought her assistance afterwards in a special critical emergency. Thoroughly conscientious, both in learning and discharging the duties of her profession, she is one of the last persons against whom the charge of incompetency could be made, not to speak of the gentle thoughtfulness and self-sacrificing devotion by which she has endeared herself to those to whom she has been called to minister, from whom she has received the warmest expressions of gratitude and other mementoes of service rendered during dark days of suffering. It only remains that I should add, that when Miss Belsey decided to take action in this case, besides personal grounds, she was influenced by the

hope that the course she had determined to take might be of some service to Probationers generally, and if you continue your advocacy of their cause on the lines of your second article, though she has suffered more deeply than it is possible for anyone to describe, she will not have suffered in vain. Probationers generally throughout the country will derive benefit from the stand she has made, and which was made at so great a cost to herself and her family.

Yours faithfully, STEPHEN HARTLEY.

[We have much pleasure in giving publicity to our correspondent's letter, and can assure the Rev. Mr. Hartley that our inquiries have more than confirmed his statements, and more than disproved the assertions made concerning Miss Belsey, by the Matron of the Worcester Infirmary. Our remarks were entirely directed against the abstract principle of Nurses who had proved to be unsatisfactory during their training being certified to the public as good Nurses by the very Hospital officials, who considered them inefficient.—Ed.]

LETTERS FROM LIFE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—I am not surprised that the Letters from Life arouse deep interest and criticism amongst Nurses. As an old journalist I may remark that I have read them all with keen interest and pleasure, and only regret that you are not able to give us a "Letter" every week. The original and forcible style in which these letters are written, compel one's attention and admiration, and it is easy to conclude that the authoress is a woman of great literary ability, and immense force of character. Miss Lade need not fear that too many of her sex are endowed with the rare and admirable characteristics possessed by Miss Phyllis Graham, whoever she may be, and that the type of matrons and sisters with whom she sympathises so innocently, will be troubled by many probationers of

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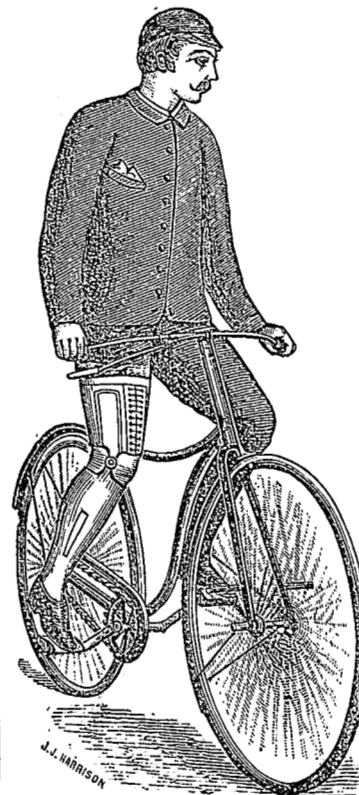
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