

what you think about having a nurses' class to study Esperanto next winter; and could we not through the International Council of Nurses encourage the nurses of other nations to do likewise? The late Congress at Boulogne seems from all accounts to have been a tremendous success.

Yours very truly,  
TONGUE TIED.

[As soon as the holidays are over we will see what can be done about an Esperanto Class, what it would cost, &c.—ED.]

#### A NURSES' JOURNAL FOR NURSES.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Only those who have read carefully the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING can realise what its influence has been in the nursing world at home and abroad, and how all important it is for a profession to have an organ under its own control. I agree with "Miriam Bridges" that we nurses should do all in our power to help Registration through the paper, which has proved what can be done in educating the public, even in the face of the powerful opposition of the quack nursing press. Let us lay to heart the lessons learnt in the past year alone. We have only to realise the fact that the quack press were unanimously against the professional interests of the nurses—that whilst not hesitating to make money out of us, that money was being utilised to try to keep us in a dependent and intolerable condition—for us to grasp the importance of having our own organ if we wish our voice to be heard in the deliberations of Parliament. After reading my own copy of this Journal I send it on to a friend who is not well off, but who is deeply interested in the Nursing Question. I also send one to a Sister in South Africa. Thus the light spreads. Let others do likewise.

Yours most truly,  
E. S. M.

#### NURSES ON BOARD SHIP.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I am very glad to see that you have again drawn the attention of your readers to the subject of nurses on board ship. From time to time this matter comes up both in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING and the public press, but no general action seems to have been taken as yet. After all, the matter rests with the public, for steamship companies are run on commercial lines, and the directors are not very likely to employ nurses simply on philanthropic grounds, although the desirability of so doing may have been amply demonstrated.

On the other hand, if the travelling public made it plain that they would give the preference to ships that carried trained nurses, we should soon have the steamship companies catering for their needs. Therefore what we nurses who know what unnecessary suffering invalids, who are compelled to travel, frequently undergo for lack of nursing care, have to do is to educate the public, so that they may insist on this concession to their needs.

The truth is the steamship companies are not keen to carry invalids, and, in fact, it is not unknown for an invalid to be dropped at a port on the route. Life on shipboard has no place for a sick man (or woman); it is designed for the convenience of the pleasure-seeker. It is difficult, and at times impossible, to get

meals in one's cabin, and the noise the whole day long, from the time the decks are washed at 4 a.m., to that when the last flirtation ceases, somewhere about midnight, beggars description.

Which brings me to another point. The need of a hospital cabin—call it sick bay or what you will, only provide for it in the construction of the ship. Many of the passengers' cabins open into the dining saloon, and the majority even of the great P. and O. liners, first-class, contain four berths in a very limited space. (The Messagerie Line, be it noted, sets a better example in that its first-class cabins have only two berths.) Now imagine the menace to the general health when a patient suffering, say, from dysentery (a very usual complaint in invalids coming home from the tropics) lies in a cabin opening into the saloon. Imagine, again, the unhealthy condition of a cabin which a sick man occupies all day for the remaining occupants at night. On all counts some provision, both in the interests of the sick and the well, should be made for the isolation of invalids in a quiet part of the ship.

One other point it is often urged in connection with suggestions for nursing on board ship, that such posts would be sought by nurses who have broken down, and who would be glad of a voyage, with the light work entailed, for the sake of their own health. I cannot think that such a suggestion would ever be made by anyone having a practical acquaintance with the difficulties of nursing at sea. To begin with, a nurse, to be of use, needs to be a seasoned sailor, and to take up work casually for a single voyage, unless she is sure of herself in this respect, would be worse than useless. Secondly, nursing at sea, if there is an acute case is anything but light work. It entails constant anxiety and devotion, and the woman who undertakes it should do so deliberately for a definite period—specialising, so to speak, in this branch of nursing. Lastly, if nursing at sea is to be made attractive to well-qualified nurses their status must be definitely assured, and they must sign their agreement as members of the ship's staff, not as servants but as officers.

I am, dear Madam,  
Yours faithfully,  
TRAVELLER.

#### THE OLD "JENNY LIND."

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—The description of the old Jenny Infirmary at Norwich, given by a contributor in your issue of last week, is quite charming. Do nurses of the present generation, who are apt to "thank the goodness and grace" that they live in a generation when the patients are "nursed," and are quite sure—when told by some of those whose hospital memories go back to the seventies and eighties, of the amount of ward work the nurses did in those days—that the patients could not have received the same attention that they do at present—it would be absolutely impossible—realize what they owe to their predecessors. Impossible—yes, if the hours off duty for recreation and study were the same as they are now. Rightly so I am quite sure, but to the nurses of those days their work was their recreation. They worked from seven in the morning to nine at night, with but scant leisure for recreation. Two evenings a week, the only time, as a rule, they could find for study, was usual; if they were not well their chief anxiety was lest the authorities should discover it, and they should be

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)