

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

THE DEEP SIGHING OF THE POOR.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—Have we reverted to something akin to the old state of things?

"Rattle his bones over the stores,
He's only a pauper whom nobody owns."

I refer to the conditions of affairs existing at this moment in the East End, where large numbers of dead have been lying unburied for an unseemly length of time.

Would not the problem have been grappled with long ago if such indecency had been experienced by influential members of the community?

One whose long life has been spent in intimate touch with the poor asks: "Why were not soldiers experienced in trench digging released in order to dig graves at this crisis?"

Similarly one might ask, "and carpenters to make coffins?"

Will the proposed Ministry of Health provide against a recurrence of such callousness towards the helpless?

"It is well it is cold weather," said my saintly old friend, significantly. She lives in the slums, you see—and knows.

HENRIETTA HAWKINS.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES MUST ORGANIZE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—At the Conference of the Royal British Nurses I was greatly interested in the observations made by the speakers, but I must say I differed when the lady who spoke upon the subject of Infant Welfare described voluntary visitors who had attended a course of lectures as being "highly trained."

It does not seem to me as if the best aspect of Infant Welfare was put forward. Would it not be better for the Association to advocate the provision of fully trained nurses, with the C.M.B. certificate, for visiting, and advising mothers? It is nothing to go into a house and find people seriously ill or dying. People who have to deal with emergencies like that need to have had experience in recognising symptoms of illness.

Mothers are often in need of advice about the care of themselves and the feeding of their babies. I think only the trained nurse is suitable for that.

It seemed to me rather waste of time to be talking about boot-mending when the more pressing problems are the provision of suitable homes for motherless babies, the provision of good cow's milk, and the appalling ignorance among all classes of people about the feeding of babies and the real duty of a mother towards her home.

Some of the Infant Welfare Centres are not really giving the right teaching to the people. The sale

of patent foods is advocated far too much. I know of one where the principle of feeding babies on tinned milk was run for years.

Is it possible to have a gathering of fully trained nurses engaged in public health work, with a view to getting up a really good public health section and putting forward good papers at the Conferences?

I should be glad to help if there was anything to be done.

Yours truly,

C. MARGARET ALDERMAN.

Westcliff.

[We are in favour of these views, and would urge trained nurses engaged in Public Health Work to form a League and formulate a sound policy for the future.—Ed.]

KERNELS.

Writing on paper, headed "British Red Cross Society" and "The Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England," Miss May Beeman replies to a nurse's protest against the Victory Ball in the name of the Nation's Nurses, as the "kick up" is in aid of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and it has no authority to speak for the profession generally or to associate our profession with this type of entertainment.

"I have received your letter protesting against the appeal of the Nation's Fund for Nurses. I cannot understand any member of the profession protesting in this way. Surely it must be plain to all that a College of Nursing on the same lines as the College of Physicians and Surgeons must go a long way to raise the nursing profession to the position it ought to hold in our national life. I mean to devote every effort to raise half a million of money, so that there may be a good endowment fund and pension fund, and incidentally a College of Nursing."

[This is the type of reply a professional woman may expect from a lady who knows absolutely nothing of our educational or economic condition—whose life is now spent in collecting for Charity schemes.

It is quite plain to a professional nurse that the College of Nursing, Ltd., is not "on the same lines as the College of Physicians and Surgeons." If it were, it would not attempt to monopolise the duties under *one lay Corporation* of the Colleges aforesaid, the General Medical Council and the British Medical Association—all composed of members of the medical profession, and therefore expert professional bodies.

The colossal ignorance of these professional philanthropists concerning nursing organization is one of the most serious dangers to which our work has ever been exposed; and it will be quite time for them to buy up our independence and hand it over to a lay Corporation when we are willing to submit. At present we resent the impertinent interference of Miss May Beeman and her associates in our affairs, as we hope to prove effectively in the near future.—Ed.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)