

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.

TO REAL FRIENDS.

The Editor has just enjoyed a happy 86th birthday, and hopes all the real friends who so kindly remembered her will accept thanks for their letters of good wishes through this journal, which has been a medium of communication with some of them for half a century. As usual, the Editor spent many hours of the day at work, and, thanks to an all-merciful Providence, corrected galleys of brevier—small print—without the use of specs. ! The card sent by one friend of our great Prime Minister, inscribed "Lift Up your Hearts. All will come right. Out of the depths of sorrow and sacrifice will be born again the glory of mankind" may well be our watchword for 1943.

GREETINGS FROM THE DOMINIONS.

Just as we went to press last month, the following kind greetings were received.

From Johannesburg, South Africa, Miss B. G. Alexander, active for so many years as a leader of nursing organisations in that great Dominion, writes:—

"This is to convey to you very best wishes for a quiet and peaceful Xmas. We hope that one day we shall meet again at the next International Council of Nurses. Meanwhile, we think of all you have done and are doing for our Profession and trust that all the clouds will roll away in the near future. Many changes are taking place in the nursing world, and we trust that they will all lead to better and more intelligent nursing care, and that all our nurses will now be taught the value of preventive medicine and positive health during the training period, as that has been a serious omission in our training schools in the past.

I am very pleased to say you get THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING most regularly, and I wish you continued success."

By the same post came warm good wishes for us all from Miss E. T. Young, President, New Zealand Registered Nurses' Association, from which we realise the value of our international associations.

[During this time of stress we are standing by, but, come peace, our national organisations by cable touch from I.C.N. headquarters, U.S.A., can spring into life and action with little delay. Let us be on the alert. Imagine the world-wide human experience which will inspire the nursing community when it is summoned to report what it has done to save human life and liberty during the years of blood-stained tyranny, horror, and heart-break throughout the world. No group of women should have a prouder record.—ED.]

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Coming Events Cast Shadows.

An L.C.C. Sister writes: "In this L.C.C. Hospital we are all interested in the public-spirited action of the London County Council School Nursing staff, and it is to be hoped that the powers that be will take warning and cease to arouse the School Nursing Sisters to further protest by de-grading their honourable corps. In this hospital we members of the nursing staff are sincerely in sympathy with them in their protest that the staff 'may be diluted by untrained women,' and before any change is made the Matron-in-Chief should issue in black and white what the definition of the proposed duties of the untrained

assistant nurses is to be. This attack upon the professional status of the School Nursing Sisters foreshadows our fate in the future. Presumably the L.C.C. authorities rely upon our financial dependence on future security and pensions. Is it any wonder suitable girls hesitate to become nurses, when Public Authorities can treat us like slaves? The British College of Nurses seems our only friend. We read THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING eagerly."

All will Suffer by De-grading Standards.

A Matron writes: "I do think it most unfair the way matrons are being criticised on nursing matters. Many of us work almost night and day owing to the shortage of skilled assistance, and all we get is unfair criticism. We are not all in favour of the de-grading policy of the Royal College of Nursing, although we may be members of it. I for one."

[The fact that the Association of Hospital Matrons has taken so active a part at the Ministry of Health in demanding legal status for "semi-trained" nurses—a disaster to nursing which will not at present affect the higher grades in the profession—has naturally aroused a bitter sense of injustice amongst working nurses, especially as they fear loss of livelihood if they complain.—ED.]

Why Not Woolworths ?

An Old Campaigner writes from Eire: "Good luck to our College and all it stands for. I often think of those days of 1919, and earnestly hope Registered Nurses will prevent any half-baked Roll being issued from their Headquarters! But it seems terribly unfair that they should have to be bothered with such matters at a time like the present. Why must the Royal College of Nursing hatch its reactionary brain-waves in the midst of a World War? the same as it did last time, in 1916. I hope the Censor won't object to my Nursing politics, but if they get their way no woman with any spirit will want to be a Nurse—at least, a Registered one.

"Woolworth's had better start a 'Roll' and provide the public with the kind of goods that the C. of N. thinks suitable for it. A peaceful Christmas to you all.—P. S."

[It seems almost impossible that enfranchised Registered Nurses are unable to grasp the danger of the de-grading policy of the Royal College of Nursing. They say: "We are too busy to be bothered. It will last our time—and if all you say is true, we shall just get out of it—and take care others do the same."

How about the patients?—ED.]

The Curb if Necessary.

Australian Nurse in England writes: "As far as I can judge the rank and file of Registered Nurses in England are apparently quite indifferent to political questions, and matrons far too diplomatic to give them a lead—in hospitals. Everything is apparently decided for them by the Association of Hospital Matrons, and the Royal College of Nursing, mostly the same people with a sprinkling of hospital managers to use the curb if necessary."

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THE PRIZE COMPETITION.

We much regret no Paper of sufficient merit has been received for publication.

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR MARCH.

State what you know about Puerperal Thrombosis and its Care.

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