

## 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.*

## REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I was in the House of Lords when the debate on the Registration of Army Nurses took precedence of that of the Registration of Nurses. I see by my journal this week that it is now proposed we should have Registration of Farmers, and of Tuberculous Cows. When these matters have been settled, may we hope that the Nurses' Registration Bill will receive the attention its importance demands?

Yours faithfully,

STILL UNREGISTERED.

## THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BILL.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—All nurses must be glad that by strenuous and concerted action, backed by a very strong public opinion, the medical profession has been able to carry most of those amendments it felt bound to demand, both for the dignity of the profession and the legitimate profit of its members. But there is no social scheme connected with sickness or national health that must not, in these days, count with the trained nurse. The more scientific and advanced medical treatment and methods of dealing with disease and infection become, the more the medical man has need of a trained assistant with the necessary knowledge and restraint to help him sympathetically in his work.

Yet, in the whole Bill nurses are but once mentioned—in Clause 17—which reads: "It shall be lawful for an approved society to grant such subscriptions or donations as it may think fit to hospitals and other charitable institutions, or for the support of district nurses, and to appoint nurses for the purpose of visiting insured persons who are members of the society, and any sums so expended shall be treated as expenditure on such benefits under this part of this Act as may be prescribed."

What nurses? Does the clause mean that any woman who likes to call herself a nurse may be employed by the approved societies? No provision whatever seems to be made to insure that sick nurses employed under a National Insurance Bill, paid for by national money, shall be efficiently and thoroughly trained in the technique of the duties they will be called upon to perform. Has that point been purposely omitted when so much care was expended in defining the qualifications of the druggist to be employed under the Act?

I am, frankly, a member of the educational nursing party, and after twenty-nine years' experience I believe strongly in the compulsory efficient training of the sick nurse before she is allowed to exercise her calling in public posts. That compulsory efficient training is demanded from the nurses who work in our naval and military hospitals. I hope no lower degree of efficiency will be accepted for our national civilian nursing service.

When the Bill comes up again for discussion during the autumn session, I trust it may be amended in such a sense that the minimum of training and experience demanded in our naval and military hospitals will be required from those working under the National Insurance Bill.

I feel so sure that the employment of nurses in social service will receive a great impetus should this Bill be passed (as it undoubtedly will be) that I think the nursing profession is fully justified in asking for representation on local health committees. Their interests are already very largely involved in national health questions, they will be so to a still larger extent in the future. Their experience of sickness and its social results is so considerable that the presence of trained experienced nurses of the right stamp would be of undoubted benefit to the committees. It is not an extravagant demand.

But nurses are not only professionally but personally interested in the Bill. They are amongst the employed to be insured. Still, now that the amendment has been accepted, providing that nurses shall have the insurance allowance of 7s. 6d. or 5s. weekly for which they have paid, even if receiving board and lodging from their employers, I think the nurses in general will ultimately find that they will receive more benefit under the Act than at first seemed likely. It should not be difficult for us to form, within a reasonable time, a Nurses' Society that would satisfy the requirements of the Bill. I for one should be most happy to assist in so doing. I think we may safely leave the money benefits to the sense of justice of those in charge of the Bill. But those points which touch the honour and usefulness of our profession we may fittingly bring to their notice on our own account.

M. MOLLETT,

*Hon. Sec., Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, late Matron, Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital.*

Three Cross, Wimborne.

## NOTICE.

## STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

Full information as to the movement for the State Registration of Trained Nurses can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

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