

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 HOURS OF ASYLUM ATTENDANTS.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It is amusing to read that a Visiting Committee actually suggested to the Select Committee on the Asylum Officers Bill that restriction of hours might interfere with the "nursing spirit" in asylums, and that with extra leave the nurses and attendants might "find the time hang heavy on their hands." Is that not like a male committee? I wonder how they would feel if they had to attend on insane patients for twelve hours a day, Sunday and week-day alike, year in, year out, with only a fortnight's holiday in the year. I think the temper of the best of them would get short sometimes, and then, we betide them. Of all people those who care for the insane need to be "fit," mentally stable and serene. How is this possible when nearly all their waking hours are spent looking after patients who are "out of their minds"? Shorter hours and opportunities for rest and recreation much more liberally planned than those at present arranged are a necessity if asylum nurses are to do their best by their patients, and to preserve their own health. As to time hanging heavy on their hands, we have heard that same argument before, but it won't wash. The men and women who find it so and are liable to misuse it are not those who will make good nurses for insane patients entrusted to their care. Before all things, such attendants must be trustworthy, or they should not be entrusted with the care of the insane. I feel sure, madam, that you will agree with this view.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

COMMON SENSE.

THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BILL.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—We are all indebted to Miss Mollett for her able letter on the subject of the National Insurance Bill. As one might expect, it is an admirably lucid and logical exposition of the situation. I hope it will have due weight, and that the position of nurses under the Bill will receive attention during the Autumn Session. So far, singularly little has been said about them, and yet on their work depends largely the success of the Act when put into force. No body of people, the medical profession not excepted, can do more to make or mar the Bill than the trained nurses of the country.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

ONE OF THE RANK AND FILE.

THE RECOGNITION OF MIDWIVES.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—We midwives owe a debt of gratitude to those Members of Parliament who have secured for us a place in the National Insurance Bill, and for maternity patients the right to decide whether they will be attended by a medical practitioner or a midwife. If this had not been done, the passing of the Insurance Bill would have been the death knell of the practising midwife. As I have no desire to lose my present means of livelihood, for I am too old to adopt another profession, I read with relief that Mr. Lees Smith and Mr. Barnes had gained for us the right to practise under the Bill. As you were, I believe, the first to point out the imminent danger which threatened us, I am writing to give honour and thanks to whom they are due.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

CERTIFIED MIDWIFE.

THE EFFECT OF REGISTRATION.

To the Editor of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It is very interesting to me to read in the delightful article by Miss Damer on nursing in the United States that the effect of nurses' registration has been to exert a decidedly uplifting influence on training schools, with the result that "nowadays the actual training must coincide more closely with the actual curriculum than it frequently did." Surely this is most encouraging to stimulate hospital authorities to set their house in order; and to secure to pupil nurses those privileges which they contracted for, and so had a right to receive, is not bad evidence of the beneficial effects of registration.

As an English nurse I must say I regard with envy the nurses in those 31 States of the Union who have secured registration laws. I hope some day, before I am quite decrepit, I shall be able to write "R.N." after my name. I am looking forward to it with all the patience at my command, but it is getting worn very threadbare. The nurses in State after State, country after country, have the happiness of seeing their profession organized and still our legislature takes no action. Is it fair to the public? Is it just to the nurses?

REGISTRATIONIST.

NOTICES.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL.

Information respecting the Matrons' Council, and forms of application for membership, may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Miss M. Mollett, Rose Cottage, Three Cross, Wimborne.

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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