

## 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.*

## IN A COTTAGE HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I do think it is a pity to review a book like "In a Cottage Hospital." The public is quite censorious enough about hospital affairs. No doubt it is greatly exaggerated. I am Matron in a cottage hospital, and although we are all greatly overworked, the moral tone is all that can be desired.

Yours truly,

A SUBSCRIBER TO "B.J.N."

[We don't believe in shirking disagreeable things—and from information received from near and far—lack of discipline is evidently undermining high nursing standards. It is time to call halt. See this week's editorial. Lack of discipline is the result of faulty superintendence—and faulty superintendence is the result of lack of the systematic training of those placed in positions of responsibility. We want a Central Nursing Authority analogous to the General Medical Council, to insist upon the proper training of nurses—and the maintenance of discipline amongst them. The selfish anti-registrationist, male and female, is entirely to blame for the present disorganized condition of nursing. We have lost twenty years' organization owing to their stupidity. The matrons who potter about in their own little patches, are only fulfilling half their duty to their profession at large, when they oppose a general standard of training and of discipline being maintained outside the gates.—ED.)

## THE LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND ITS REMEDY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I read with much interest your review of "In a Cottage Hospital," and have procured the book and read this terrible story. The worst part of it to me is that it impresses me with its truth, and although it seems almost inconceivable that everything that it relates could have happened in one institution, yet one cannot honestly say that any individual episode seems over-drawn, and one can call to mind many incidents which are quite as tragic, quite as terrible as those in the story.

Its lesson, as you justly point out, is the urgent need for State Registration of Trained Nurses, such neglect and lack of discipline as is depicted in the story could not for long be hidden from the governing body of the nursing profession, which would deal with any members who so disgraced their calling.

Until such time as the governing body is constituted, the sick will continue to be at the

mercy of unconscientious and fast women who choose to don our uniform and have no conception of the seriousness of our calling. Let those who are endeavouring to hinder nursing organisation under State authority ponder well the responsibility they are assuming.

Yours faithfully,

TIRED OF WAITING.

## THE NURSING SPIRIT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—In your editorial of February 3rd you have struck the right note.

I watch with surprise and dismay many of the present day probationers. I think that with them "off duty time" looms larger than the work in the wards, and if duty demands a change in their hours of recreation, instead of complying cheerfully, they are not backward in letting it be understood what martyrs they are in having to give up some pre-arranged pleasure.

It is a pleasure loving age, and probationers, I find, have no time to read a nursing paper, even when it is provided for them, and of course they cannot spare 1d. per week to buy one for themselves. But if this letter should meet the eye of a "would-be" probationer, let me advise her to choose a Training School away from her former friends and gaieties. In new surroundings it will be easier for her to devote herself wholeheartedly to her work. In nearly all institutions nowadays, healthy recreations and good food are provided. A bicycle ride or a game at tennis will prove more refreshing than a musical (!) or cinematograph tea in a crowded, airless room. Balls and late theatres cannot be indulged in, except on the eve of a holiday, for how can a nurse expect to be fresh for her work at 6 a.m. after them? "The game is not worth the candle." The result being the patients, instead of receiving the care due to them, are the victims of irritable nerves. Discredit is brought upon the hospital, and the conscientious nurses suffer equally with the pleasure seekers, and all sink alike in the opinion of the public, and in this way prevent professional progress.

The girl who cannot give up her pleasures and exercise self-control should take up some other occupation, one in which she would do less harm in her work and to her profession.

Although I do not wish any nurse to work as hard as the few who survived in the eighties (they were good days, and are good to look back upon) yet I should like to see a little of the old spirit revived. They can enjoy life later on in other ways.

Yours faithfully,

ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE FIT.

## IRISH NURSES AND INSURANCE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—We have to thank your JOURNAL for the very comprehensive manner in which the position of nurses under the National Insurance Act has been placed before the profession. Had

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)