

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.

NURSES NOT SATISFIED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I think that the Prime Minister's reply to the Deputation which waited upon him on April 28th was far from satisfactory.

What struck me was the superficiality of his remarks; one might reasonably expect from a lawyer a certain measure of profundity in argument, and logical reasoning, in dealing with a matter which he himself admits is of importance to the "community at large." We find, on the contrary, that he puts forward no arguments, he merely talks in a conciliatory manner, such as one would adopt in speaking to children who were asking for something they could not have. His remarks are not logical. He takes the fetish of numbers and draws false conclusions. It is frivolous to make use of numbers to support a claim unless it represents opinion based on knowledge. The ninety-one chairmen of Hospitals mentioned by Mr. Asquith as opposed to State Registration for Nurses, do not represent either professional or lay opinion, they merely represent their own personal views! Neither do the collective 244 Matrons represent the opinion of their Nurses—many of whom are—we well know—directly opposed to their Matrons' narrow views, and autocratic attitude towards the needful reform. The next figure is 1,332; this is said to be the number of Nurses opposed to the measure, besides 340 doctors. That may very well be so, but as far as my experience goes, those Nurses opposed to it usually understand little or nothing about it! The 340 doctors again only represent themselves, so are not *representative*. Numbers are of value only in so far as they are truly and honestly representative. For instance, as the General Medical Council and the British Medical Association have passed Resolutions in favour of the Reform, we know absolutely that those two important bodies desire the State Registration of Nurses; to say nothing of all the other bodies who have used numbers in the same legitimate way. If Mr. Asquith relies upon numbers, he should have made a mental subtraction sum, namely 40,000 less 1667—majority for State Registration of Nurses 38,333!

Yours truly,

BEATRICE KENT.

Colosseum Terrace, N.W.

NURSES, PLEASE SPEAK OUT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I note your advice to nurses to "speak out" before it is too late on the Bill to

Amend the Law with respect to Bankruptcy and Deeds of Arrangement." I quite feel with "Member R.N.S." we are a very inert profession, but even when we do speak out, what do we gain by it? Nothing but to "pay, pay, pay," under the National Insurance Act; and as for Registration, many of us have worked, paid, and spoken for this reform for years, and what is the result? Nothing but advice from the Premier which is absolutely useless. Fancy saying to deputations of working men's unions, "Go to your employers, your paymasters, and when your views are unanimous then you shall have what sort of legislation you can agree upon"! This is not possible. Legislation is required to protect the workers from unfair conditions, and nurses are in the same position, only more so, because they have no votes, as male operatives and other industrial workers. The Premier might as well advise us to go into a lion's den and not expect to be eaten up. If hospital committees knew anything about nursing without being told, or had dealt justly with our education or conditions, we should not have troubled the Premier for reforms! As it is, what with Parliament and what with employers, we nurses are merely shuttlecocks between two battledores.

The only way out, it appears, is never to go in, and that is what our unjust treatment is resulting in—a shortage of nurses, and suffering for the sick poor. For a quarter of a century nurses have been begging and praying for better conditions. If speaking out has no effect, my advice is, keep out of institutions where the employer is permitted absolute power over you, body and soul, as they have in hospitals, infirmaries, and asylums. In no other work is this power permitted; why should it be encouraged under the cloak of charity?

Yours truly,

A BADLY-TRAINED NURSE
WHO RESENTS IT.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

May 24th.—What are the signs before delivery that the child's life is in danger? What would you do in such a case?

May 31st.—Say what you know about epilepsy and its treatment.

NOTICES.

WHERE TO GET THE B.J.N.

If unable to procure THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING through a newsagent, the manager desires to be informed of the fact. If you ask for this Journal, do not be put off with a substitute. Copies can always be procured at the offices, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., and through Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son. In Scotland from Menzies & Co., Glasgow; and in Ireland from Fanning & Co., Dublin.

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