

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 PURPLE PAMPHLET.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I note that the Purple Pamphlet (yellow would be its binding in New York City), issued conjointly by the Chairman and Matron of the London Hospital, ends with a very misleading statement in reference to registration of nurses in New York.

If our old friend Mr. Sydney Holland (Lord Knutsford) will write about New York State I do wish he would first inform himself; but this, doubtless, is asking too much. Every fact he could cite correctly would be a fact in favour of registration. In New York we have an immense cosmopolitan population, great wealth attracting workers from all over the world. We are also troubled considerably there by gentlemen of monopolistic and capitalistic tendencies. Our registration act is not a compulsory one as yet, and most of the nurses not registered, to whom he refers, are attendants who have left the hospitals for the insane, or women who have been robbed of their time and strength in some commercially managed institution, often from foreign countries, or from retarded states. Such women are unable to pass the State examination, and knowing this, do not try, but simply keep to such private duty as they can get, often being exploited there also because they are not up to grade. It is also true that some good private nurses are not registered, because they have gained a steady clientèle and have *not* gained a generous concern for their profession or for the general public.

However, it must be pointed out that over our whole country, not only in New York, registration is required as one of the testimonials in all our public services—I say *one* testimonial, for the dreaded bogey of *character* is easily slain by making *individual* inquiries as to tact, dignity, adaptability, &c. No nurse now can be accepted in Army or Navy service, Red Cross work, Public School Nursing, or district (visiting) Nursing under our Public Health Nursing Associations, unless she is a Registered Nurse. Hospitals of good grade of course require it for permanent posts. This has come about, in spite of our permissive acts, by the voluntary decisions of the governing bodies of those services. It will therefore be seen that it is only in private nursing, where the well-to-do are concerned, who are, after all, best able to protect themselves, that the unregistered nurse can flourish. Our poor are protected against her. No "Cottage nurse" could hope to be engaged by our district nursing societies, except as a "household help" under the direction of the trained

nurse or as a domestic helper after the nurse leaves.

The weak point of our New York legislation is that it is not compulsory. We are working to amend that, and when we succeed, all women intending to nurse the sick will have to be properly trained. Our unregistered nurses will then have to leave New York, and, if Lord Knutsford still has his way, they can come over here.

L. L. DOCK,

Hon Secretary International Council of Nurses.
London.

PRIZE MONEY FOR THE CAUSE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Many thanks for cheque for 5s. received this morning. I return it endorsed for the "War Chest."

Miss Mollett's letter in this week's issue gave me great pleasure because she does express the appreciation of so many who have not the gift of saying "I thank you," and amongst them yours truly,

MARY HARVEY.

Heatherhurst, Frimley.

THE PUBLIC SUFFER.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—As Hon. Sec. and Treas. of the Isla Stewart Memorial Fund, I thought some of your readers might be interested to know what nurses in distant lands feel about Registration, as expressed in the following extract from a letter: "I am always so interested in the work Miss Stewart began, and that you all continue so firmly. In this country (Upper Burma), we see the need for Registration and education of nurses, even more than at home. We have just had a most troublesome adventuress, 'English Nurse,' who has now gone on to India, telling them she was Matron here six months, whereas she took temporary work as a nurse and was discharged as quite untrained; there is no way of punishing or letting others know of these people."

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours truly,

Cleveland House,
Chiswick Lane, W.

ELLEN SHUTER.

THE REGISTRATION OF NATIVE NURSES

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am much obliged for the copy of your issue of the 17th January, which you kindly sent me, and was interested to read your Editorial on the Registration of Native Nurses. Personally I agree with Dr. Gregory that a lower grade certificate for coloured persons is desirable. The question of competition is not really so important as some seem to think. No one is going to take for choice a lower grade native when she can get a more highly trained white woman, even if she has to pay more for her. And if the pro-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)