

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.

DO MATRONS WISH TO RETIRE?

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—An interesting train of thought is opened to us by Miss Grace Tindall's letter in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING for March 21st: "Do Matrons wish to retire?"

She asks for opinions and invites discussion, and in answer to her appeal I am asking a question and offering a warning.

In a previous number of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, your readers will doubtless have admired the picture of the "lucky retired Matron" feeding her chickens amid pleasant surroundings, and they will have read the alluring description of the rose-covered cottage, in which the aforesaid Matron passes peaceful, happy days and quiet, undisturbed nights. The majority of "Matrons still in harness" will envy her, and vote in her favour.

But there is another side to the question. How long does this "Haven of Rest" satisfy the woman of keen intellect and vigorous mind, the woman who has lived a strenuous life of work in the service of others? 'Tis true that at times she needs a rest sorely, but, when that need is satisfied, she awakes from sleep, and holding out her arms she finds them empty!

Doubtless work of some kind will come her way—work useful to the community at large—opportunities will arise for "helping lame dogs over stiles," but the *mother heart* of the true Matron will ever yearn and ache for the children she has trained and cherished and for her life work that has passed into the hands of strangers.

To Miss Tindall and other over-worked Matrons I would say, "Hold on! Fight on! Heart within and God o'erhead," for—

"We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

—Longfellow.

ANNIE E. HULME.

THE STATUS OF THE TRAINED NURSE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I note in a recent JOURNAL that a Judge in the High Courts has decided that a trained nurse is a domestic servant. This is not pleasing to our *amour propre*, but it may affect nurses in a way not perhaps contemplated.

It is well known that probationers may be and are summarily dismissed on most trivial grounds, or with no reason given at all. "Doorstepped" is the term used by the nursing staff of one hospital concerning this practice. Next time a nurse is "doorstepped" she will be able, apparently, to

claim the right of a domestic servant to a month's wages. I imagine this would have a salutary effect on this most arbitrary and unjust practice, and lead hospital committees to think twice before permitting it.

Yours faithfully,
MOTHER.

LEGITIMATE BOYCOTT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I herewith enclose P.O. 2s.—1s. to pay my annual subscription to the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, and 1s. which I have before given to the League of Mercy, but as the League supports the "Anti's" have decided to give to it no more.

Yours faithfully,
E. M. DICKSON.

Stoke Road,
Gosport, Hants.

GOOD WISHES FROM NEW ZEALAND.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have long been a subscriber of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING (which I obtain through local newsagent). I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it each week. It keeps me in touch with the latest of everything in the nursing world, and is on all occasions the champion for maintaining our profession at the highest standard. How I wish I could see that our English sisters had obtained State Registration. But with steady fighting for such a good cause it must soon be successful. You have my heartiest good wishes in the matter.

Thanking you for your interest in us so far away nurses,

I am,
Yours faithfully,
MABEL THURSTON,
Lady Superintendent.

Christchurch Hospital,
New Zealand.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

April 11th.—Describe (a) one disease due to bacteria in the air; (b) one disease due to bacteria in water and soil; (c) one disease due to bacteria in food?

April 18th.—How would you apply first aid to the injured in Eye Accidents, if far from a doctor?

April 25th.—Name diseases which may cause obstruction in the oesophagus, and how is it usual to feed such patients?

NOTICE.

The Editor, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, will be greatly obliged if correspondents will not address her as "Sir," as THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING is a professional journal entirely edited and its policy controlled by trained nurses. It is not merely a publication run by lay persons for commercial purposes.

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