

intendent Nurse might have been held had those about her possessed eyes to see.

To be "under the heel" of the Master and at the mercy of any individual who may happen to be a Guardian bespeaks intolerable coercion and suppression, which, even if not pressed, as in this particular case, to the breaking point, must cause undue and exhausting strain and take the joy out of work, however well that work *per se* may be accomplished. Let us do something to relieve this undue weight and, haply, save others of our number. As a body—alas, that for lack of State recognition, I cannot say a profession!—we should speak with no uncertain voice.

I look, Madam, to THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING to indicate, as it has so often done in times past, the wisest form of protest to adopt.

Yours faithfully,

ELLEN B. KINGSFORD.

North Finchley, N.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—What responsible nurses have to suffer under the present Poor Law system, where they are "under the heel" of the Master, and overbearing coarse male Guardians, only those like myself, who have endured and escaped from it can know. It is too terrible for words. The young can leave, but to dependent older women, to do so may mean starvation. Committees and Boards seem to realise that, and use the whip hand unsparingly. Some of us feel deeply for poor Miss Phipps, broken and despairing, fleeing to the forgiveness of God from the brutality of man. I have gone very near the edge—standing on the edge of the landing place for the local steamer, ready "to fall in accidentally," and I am not a degenerate, but was lacerated by cruel tongues to desperation.

Yours,

"VERITAS."

#### THE ELIMINATION OF THE GENUS MATRON.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Why has the office of Matron been carefully eliminated from the composition of the nursing department of so many hospitals organized for active service? As far as I can learn, not one of these units seems to consider it necessary to place an experienced Matron in charge of the nurses. Surely this is entirely contrary to the teaching of our great prototype, "The Lady in Chief," in the Crimean War, who laid down very strongly that only trained women should supervise and maintain discipline in the nursing department of a hospital. Doctors and committees have entirely assumed this authority as far as I can learn in arranging hospitals for the Front. Why are we Matrons so ineffective? The result is that our office has apparently been depreciated in the constitution of free lance war hospitals. Nothing could be worse for discipline and nursing standards.

Yours truly,

A MEMBER OF THE MATRONS' COUNCIL.

[See Editorial.—ED.]

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I draw your attention to the action of the Stone Joint Hospital Board as regards the appointment of Matron for their Fever Hospital and Tuberculosis Sanatorium? On September 15th they had four candidates for interview, women with good general, fever, and sanatorium experience, some from a great distance and at personal inconvenience, only to insult them, knowing that they had already made up their minds to have the portèr's wife as Matron, not for nursing qualifications, but presumably because her husband the portèr was a footballer. In consequence the whole of the staff have resigned, and for no other reason than the insult to our noble profession. I am sorry for the insult offered to those trained women who came from a distance on a make-believe interview.

Also the M.O.H. needs our pity that he has to work with a Matron concerning whose appointment he has no power. The ratepayers also need sympathy.

JUSTICE.

[All our sympathy is with the patients.—ED.]

#### REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. D. F.—See Editorial this week. No; we believe in "business as usual," and the object of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses is "To obtain an Act of Parliament providing for the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses," and to accomplish by that object the prevention of sickness and the more efficient care of sick people. War only accentuates the necessity for such an Act. We do not approve of Women Suffrage Societies turning aside from the work they are specially organised to accomplish. General philanthropic and organizing work can well be done by the committees formed for that purpose, Suffragists helping on such committees as their time permits, but the real object of suffrage societies is to obtain power for women to become responsible citizens; and we maintain, here again, War demonstrates the absolute necessity that women should exercise such power.

L. W. N.—Will answer numerous questions next week. Reply to No. 5 is No, but every effort should be made to increase circulation, so as to increase influence. Everything we value as professional women is opposed by the commercial nursing press.

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

##### QUESTIONS.

October 10th.—Give the items for a seven days' satisfying diet, for wounded soldiers on Full Diet, in a Territorial Hospital, for breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper. Give the approximate cost for twenty men.

October 17th.—Say what you know about Dysentery and how it is treated.

October 24th.—Describe a course of procedure if secondary hemorrhage should follow the removal of tonsils.

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