

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.

"BEWARE."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—A straw shows which way the wind blows, and there is an ugly rumour going round that V.A.D.'s and W.O. special probationers who desire to train may do so in the hospital training schools, and that the time served in the Army hospitals will be deducted from their three years' training! Such a state of affairs must not be entertained for a moment. No "war helper" has been taught by any trained nurse in the way we train our probationers in peace time. Firstly, there is not the time; secondly, what is the use when you do not know (and sometimes consider the helper unsuitable) if she desires to continue nursing after the war. Any nursing these girls have picked up in the military hospitals is sketchy in the extreme. Personally, I allot certain duties to certain "helpers," and instruct them in these duties only. They receive no lectures, no regular systematic training, and yet it is suggested that if such a probationer has served two years in a military hospital, one year in a general hospital will certificate her! If our nursing profession does not take warning and wake up it will be in the condition our country was when misgoverned by the "Wait and See" Government. Now is the time to form a strong union of trained (real trained) nurses holding three years' certificates in a general hospital, and to take up our position, stipulate with hospitals that they shall train probationers on certain lines so as to enable them to enter for a central examination at the end of their course, and prevent the government of our profession being usurped by employers and the laity, and make it impossible for untrained people ever again to wear nurses' military decorations or masquerade in their uniform.

Looking about for such a union I lighted on the National Union of Trained Nurses. On enquiry I found it to be a thoroughly democratic society governed by trained nurses elected by their fellow members. They aim at State Registration for trained nurses by Act of Parliament, higher education and training, and through direct representation of the rank and file they shall obtain freedom of action, their professional and economic interests will be forwarded, together with arrangements for deepening and widening nurses' social interests and giving them post-graduate classes. Such a union could be of immeasurable use to the profession if we raise the membership and become a thoroughly independent body. I promptly joined and now

wish others to do so also, so that we may form a union strong enough to obtain legal advice and protection for its members.

Yours truly,

J. B. N. PATERSON.

The Address of the National Union of Trained Nurses is 46, Marsham Street, Westminster, S.W.

APPRECIATION OF THE N.U.T.N.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—For a long time I have wanted to express my gratitude through your Journal to the National Union of Trained Nurses for the help and kindness they have so cheerfully given. I am sure I am only one of many Colonials who feel the same and will be glad to see these few lines. I am convinced that many have called at the offices and few have left without feeling helped and encouraged.

I should also like to draw attention to the generous piece of work which is being done in conducting the War Register for Nurses wanting posts. When one considers that no fee is charged, and that the expense for forms and postage must be great, without considering the time of the lady who undertakes that department, I am surprised that so little comment has been made in the press; but I suppose it is the National Union's way of "doing their bit."

I do not know of any other place in London where nurses can obtain advice on professional matters in a more friendly spirit, and I was much impressed by the number of little green stars (the badge of the Union) one meets in France; they make one realise how the Union is spreading.

Yours faithfully,

SISTER JACKSON.

National Hotel, W.C.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

QUESTIONS.

March 31st.—What is a civic nurse? Give an idea of her true relationship to the municipality and public health service.

April 7th.—How would you render first aid to a patient suffering from burns in a workman's cottage, where few remedies were available, and what steps would you take to secure the efficient nursing of the patient?

April 14th.—What precautions would you take in nursing patients in a ward devoted to the reception of persons suffering from venereal diseases? How may infection spread (1) from one patient to another, (2) to the nurse-in-charge?

April 21st.—How are wounds infected? How may infection be avoided or minimized?

COST OF B.J.N. 2d. WEEKLY.

Please note that after March 31st, the cost of this Journal will be 2d. weekly, and a definite order should be given to the newsagent (see order form, page ii). The Editor relies upon her loyal clientèle to support their own Journal during the war, which has greatly increased the cost of its production.

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