

## 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.*

## A MENACE TO PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—The Press is being flooded with a portmanteau appeal for funds, to which the attention of those who are interested in professional development and the economic independence of the worker should be drawn.

The British Women's Hospital Committee are appealing for funds

"To promote an endowment for the College of Nursing and Tributes or Annuities for individual nurses."

This dangerous double appeal is worded so as to touch the feelings of those who have belongings in the Army and Navy, and is supported by prominent people, who, without doubt, have no idea that in so doing they may be injuring the best interests of those whom they desire to benefit. The appeal for Annuity funds is one thing; the endowment of the College of Nursing is another—quite another. The self-governing nurses' societies and a large number of independent nurses are strongly opposing the policy of the College in regard to its Bill for State Registration, believing that it would be most injurious to the status of the profession and to the economic independence of the worker.

In contributing to the portmanteau fund the public—all unrealising—will be endowing the College, and in endowing the College as it is at present constituted, they will be injuring the cause of the workers.

The appeal has appeared in nearly every paper published, but we have found it impossible to get the nurses' point of view brought forward effectively, for out of 26 letters sent to the Press, only two have been published.

Madam, this is a question which those who are striving for the cause of the worker should investigate. The most effective way to help nurses, who are at this time too absorbed in war work to attend to professional organisation, is to assist in protecting their independence and in promoting legislation that will be beneficial to them. Annuity funds should be administered by the employed quite independently of the employer.

I shall be very glad to furnish any information desired.

Yours faithfully,

E. L. C. EDEN,

Hon. Secretary.

National Union of Trained Nurses,  
46, Marsham Street, Westminster, S.W.

[Nurses cannot do better than consult Miss E. L. C. Eden on their professional affairs. She has devoted herself to their interests for so many

years, and studied nursing politics from every standpoint.—ED.]

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I was very interested in Miss Kent's letter in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING this week. My brother, who is writing this for me, says that had she written to the *Spectator*, in which on October 27th there was a similar article to that in the *Observer*, they would have allowed her letter to appear. Several nurses that I know look upon it as a shame that we are being persuaded and bullied into joining this College of Nursing (and for that reason I am not signing my name for fear of this letter going astray), and a disgrace that we nurses should be appealing to charity when money is so much wanted for other things. As Miss Hawkins says in the same issue, if we cannot afford to run the profession without charity we ought to be paid sufficiently well to enable us to do so, but it is degrading that we should appeal to the public as mendicants.

Hoping you, who can afford to show independence, will succeed in championing the cause of many nurses who dare not speak out.

A NURSE.

## AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNING BODY THE ONLY SAFE SYSTEM.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Do you consider it right for a very powerful secretary of a hospital to use his influence to make members of the nursing staff join the College of Nursing, especially as he appears exceedingly ignorant of the whole question.

Having occasion to go to the secretary's office on business recently I was surprised to have him hand me papers—which to my mind are very misleading—in support of the College, with a thinly veiled suggestion that it would be better for me to join it. I asked him why, if it was for the benefit of nurses, the Privy Council had not granted the things it wanted in conjunction with the Royal British Nurses' Association? He didn't seem to know it hadn't, but said "that was a mere detail, and nurses should be loyal to their committees and matrons if they approved of the College."

I told him it wasn't loyalty but self-interest which would influence nurses if they were coerced, and that in time would demoralise the whole school. People couldn't be loyal without respect.

Yours truly,

A SISTER.

[What the nursing profession needs is an independent Governing Body, analogous to the General Medical Council, and we shall be satisfied with nothing less.—ED.]

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

## QUESTIONS.

December 8th.—(a) What symptoms may be found in an infant who is suffering from congenital syphilis? (b) What symptoms may develop in a new-born infant if the mother is suffering from gonorrhoea?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)