

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.

SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR NURSES.
AN IMPERIAL QUESTION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am an Australian Nurse and one of the original promoters of the scheme which resulted in the formation of the Australian Trained Nurses' Association.

I also have the honour to be a member of its Elected Council and have enjoyed the privilege of understanding the inner workings of the same. Naturally, the efforts to bring about State Registration interest all fully qualified nurses throughout the Empire.

If—and here lies the whole difficulty—hospitals would stand aside and allow the nurses themselves to fix their own standards, aided in their deliberations by some of the medical profession, who have made the best of the Nursing Profession what they are, by their practical interest in all that concerns proper training, then we should doubtless soon have a strong popular basis of opinion that would, from its very simplicity, compel respect and loyal adherence of all branches of nursing thought.

My fellow member of the A.T.N.A. makes one little mistake in her otherwise correct letter. The A.T.N.A. is edited by a small sub-committee consisting of two trained nurses as well as a medical member, and managed for advertisements, &c., by someone who has the experience lacking among nurses for such business details.

It is hard in Australia to understand the conditions prevailing in the United Kingdom and our Journal (A.T.N.A.) was absolutely correct in its non-committal attitude.

For ten years a filled-in form lay in my drawer ; this while the R.B.N.A. was disputing. At the end of that time a lull came and I joined, and proud to do so.

We love peace professionally. War to the knife against old King Death, but no one else.

Let Nurses, as Nurses, meet and confer, let them select their own most trusted and fully qualified representatives, both nursing and medical, and then abide by their decisions. The standard will have to be high, to enable proper reciprocity conditions to be evolved.

Yours faithfully,

ANOTHER AUSTRALIAN ARMY SISTER.
Australian Auxiliary
Hospital No. 1.

DEAR MADAM,—May I heartily support the contention of "An Australian Army Sister" that professional self-government by the Nursing Profession "is an Imperial Question"? I have

been strongly convinced of this since being engaged in military nursing in Europe.

I am a New Zealand trained nurse ; at home we have State Registration (on a system, I own, which needs improvement), but we have legal status. As soon as we land in England we lose our professional status, and as we have no military rank as the Canadians have, many of us think it is high time the Home Government realised that if our work is of imperial value, it should have some recognition. Many New Zealand Sisters read your valuable Journal and approve its policy.

Yours truly,

A NEW ZEALAND ARMY SISTER.

DEMOCRACY AND AUTOCRACY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—When addressing his constituents in the Kinnaird Hall at Dundee last Saturday, Mr. Winston Churchill "discussed the patriotism which had been shown throughout the war by the great masses of the British people and showed how, now democracy was fighting autocracy, now that Russia had freed herself, now that the United States had entered the war, there was not a single exception to this. All the countries whose Governments owned the people as if they were a kind of cattle were on the one side, and all the countries where the people owned the Governments, which were controlled by free citizens acting through parliamentary institutions and based on popular election, were on the other.

That was a tremendous fact. The great idea was that the Governments should never again own the people in any part of the world, but that the people should dispose of their own destinies. The military autocratic tyranny which allowed a handful of shallow, vainglorious persons, who only drew their ideas from a narrow and artificial circle, to dispose of millions of men, to twist their very virtues into a means of tormenting their neighbours—that system must finally cease and determine."

May I call attention to the fact that the Governments which profess to be democratic—our own, for instance—still own the women "as if they were a kind of cattle"? and until we women are enfranchised, it is mere hypocrisy to talk of the Government being owned by free citizens, as half the people are unable "to dispose of their own destinies." The position of trained nurses will also remain that of "a kind of cattle" until they are professionally enfranchised.

Yours truly,

A MEMBER OF THE SCOTTISH NURSES'
ASSOCIATION.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTION.

August 4th.—What instruction would you give to expectant mothers on the subject of breast feeding of their infants, and how would you help them to prepare for this duty?

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