

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.

RECONSTRUCTION IN THE NURSING PROFESSION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—So much interest is being shown in the problems connected with the re-building of the nation that I feel this is not an inappropriate moment to draw the attention of your readers to an important movement in the organisation of the nursing profession, which has been developing for a number of years. The essence of the movement makes it unostentatious and unclamorous for assistance, but that very fact will enlist the sympathy of those who believe in sound organisation and self-respecting effort.

I need say nothing in these days about the immense importance to the community of the nursing profession, and I merely allude to it in order to show that this being so, it is also a matter of real interest to the public that nurses should be organised on right lines. As stated in a recent publication: "All the proposals which are connected with the re-organisation of public health must, for their efficient treatment, depend greatly upon the work of nurses."

An upward turning point comes in the history of a profession when its members realize that the responsibility for its development rests on their shoulders. Those who have studied the history of the medical profession know what a great influence for good was brought to bear when the rank and file of medical men banded themselves together into the British Medical Association. The keynote of such an organisation is that the responsibility for a profession shall be shouldered by the profession itself. Self-respect, self-government, self-development, self-support. The National Union of Trained Nurses has had for a number of years a system of Branch organisation, providing for post-graduate lectures, opportunities for discussion and practical demonstration. It assists its members with free legal and professional advice. It upholds the interests of nurses in Parliament and on public bodies. It runs an employment bureau for nurses which has proved to be of great value. Many nurses—members and non-members—have expressed their appreciation of the friendly welcome and expert advice they receive at the Central Office, 46, Marsham Street, Westminster.

The Society has a very carefully thought out democratic constitution and is managed entirely by members of the profession on the system of local representation on a central body. It is run on practical business lines for the benefit of nurses, but it has from the beginning always borne the good of the country in mind, thus avoiding one

of the great pitfalls of similar organisations—a narrow professionalism.

The National Union of Trained Nurses is affiliated to the Royal British Nurses' Association, which is the only society of women possessing a Royal Charter, with the powers that result therefrom.

The members of the public who understand the importance of professional development will be glad to realize the existence of so soundly organised a society for nurses and will doubtless give it their support, and nurses should join in large numbers to give it the strength necessary to carry out its reason for existence. The body which will administer the affairs connected with State Registration must be one representing all nursing interests, and a bill safeguarding this has for years been before Parliament, but it is of the utmost importance that there should be a strong society such as the National Union of Trained Nurses—representing trained professional opinion—in existence, both whilst the bill is being considered and after the Act comes into force, in order that the beneficent effect of a wide range of free opinion may be brought to bear on all matters affecting the profession.

All information can be procured from the Secretary, 46, Marsham Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Yours faithfully,

E. L. C. EDEN.

A VEXATIOUS ARRANGEMENT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—In answer to your correspondent *re* R.N.P.F. annuitants, I should like to state the annuitant has no need to send either doctor's or clergyman's certificate in acknowledgement of her quarterly allowance. It is sufficient for her receipt paper to be signed by someone who knows her personally, and who will also witness her signature, which implies that she is alive. Therefore there is no need for publicity in respect to her private affairs. Neither is Income Tax deducted from her annuity. The amount of her annuity must be recorded in the ordinary way if she is liable to Income Tax duty. A *special certificate* was sent out last March to be signed by others than friends, but that is the only occasion I know of.

ONE OF THE SECOND THOUSAND.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

August 17th.—What is pernicious anæmia? How have you seen it treated?

August 24th.—What points would you observe in paying an ante-natal visit to an expectant mother? What would you impress upon the patient?

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