

ity showing both the force of temptation to a good man and the long and painful process of his restoration.

H. H.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

OUR POLICY.

Don't forget that December 14th is Polling Day, and if possible before that date interview the Parliamentary candidates in your constituency and ask them a few pertinent questions as follows:

1. Are you going to work for a just peace with indemnities for the cost of the war, damage made good, to hold what we have in hand in German colonies, the banishment of Germans from our shores for years to come—in fact, Britain for the British—so that our race may not be further contaminated by the criminal strain of the Hun?

The deplorable flabbiness of the attitude of the average politician towards a treacherous and savage foe makes it the more imperative that true patriots should be very firm on these points. It was Coventry Patmore who said, "Nations die of softening of the brain, which, for a long time, passes for softening of the heart."

2. Are you heart and soul in favour of a Health Ministry, so that there may be fresh air, pure water, unadulterated food, a good house, a bit of garden, plenty of coal, light and transport for all, also of a practical education and plenty of work, so that it may be possible for women to bear and rear children without heartbreak?

Don't forget that we have a higher percentage of physical unfits than any belligerent country!

3. Will you support the just Bill for the State Registration of Nurses, promoted by the Central Committee, so that their educational and economic conditions can be defined and protected to enable them to take their place in the general scheme for raising the standard of the nation's health, free from grinding poverty and unskilled competition?

If the candidate is in sympathy with these demands, vote for him or her, as the case may be.

COMING EVENTS.

December 7th.—General Hospital, Birmingham. Nurses' League. Autumn Meeting at General Hospital, Birmingham. Address by Miss Bartleet on "Local Government Work." 3 p.m.

December 7th.—Irish Nurses' Association. Meeting Executive Committee, 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. 8 p.m.

December 14th.—League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses' League. Winter General Meeting. Clinical Theatre, St. Bartholomew's Hospital. 2.30 p.m. Social gathering, Nurses' Sitting Room. Tea, music.

December 19th.—Royal British Nurses' Association. Lecture: "Bokhara and Samarkand" (fully illustrated by lantern slides) by Miss Annette Meakin, F.R.G.S. Chair: Miss Mildred Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., Vice-President. The Rooms of the Medical Society of London, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W. 1. 2.45 p.m.

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.

"THE UNTRAINED COMMANDANT."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have read so often the unkind and unjust criticisms of V.A.D. Commandants, that I feel bound to protest.

Why, when these ladies undertake the duties of a commandant, should they be expected to be trained?

Surely, in that case, their duties would lie in the nursing, not the administration, of a hospital! One does not expect the chairman of a hospital to have the qualifications of a physician or surgeon. I have worked under our Commandant now for over two and a-half years, and under her management of clear judgment, justice, firmness and great understanding, our hospital has been run in all its branches—office, wards and kitchen, in perfect harmony and unison.

Our patients (now numbering over 1,100) well fed and well cared for, are always happy and very well behaved. The whole staff, both in kitchen and wards, have always been very happy and contented in their work, their only regret being the fact that in the natural course of events our hospital must soon close.

If the many hundreds of posts held by the hard-worked and long-suffering Commandants in the past four years had been held by highly trained and efficient nurses, who would have nursed our wounded soldiers?

The "Untrained Commandant," I presume!

SISTER-IN-CHARGE.

56, Herfs.

[We are glad to hear of a Commandant who apparently does not interfere with the professional duties of the Sister-in-Charge, but according to her charge she has the right to do so—and in hundreds of Red Cross Hospital engages the Nursing Staff, and controls—or fails to maintain discipline; moreover the Commandant wears the cap and apron of the professional nurse. Why? Chairmen of hospitals do not don the surgeon's operating gown.

During the war we have constantly been applied to for Nurses by Commandants, and all correspondence concerning these professional nurses is conducted by them, even if there is, which often there is not, a Sister-in-Charge. Moreover, we have before us testimonials written by Commandants, expressing opinions concerning the *professional qualifications and work of trained nurses*—and in many instances they practically act as Matrons and interfere with the nursing of the patients, of which they know nothing. Some have the effrontery to attempt to control the medical officer. To quote: "Can you find me a working

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)