

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 OLD CONTEMPTIBLES."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I feel I would like to tell you that I respect the attitude you took towards the Victory Ball.

It is now that victory is here and that peace will soon be declared that we who have lost our dear ones in this war feel our loss the more acutely, for we each one begin to realise that when "the boys come home" there will be the vacant place left in our home circle, never to be filled again.

Can those fortunate ones who will have the joy of receiving their beloved back from the jaws of death again, blame us mourners if indulgence in frivolous pleasures on their part (even in the name of a good cause) is looked upon by us as both unseemly and heartless, and as a want of reverence for our dead who gave their lives for them as well as us.

Besides, have we not been told by many thinking people, as well as by the Church, that the war was allowed to come upon us because of it being a careless pleasure-seeking, self-indulgent age, and that we needed this calamity to remind us that this life was not all we had to live for. If we, now that the war is over, return to the same pre-war ways, and indulge in excesses of all kinds of worldly pleasures and riotous living, will it be showing thankfulness for victory granted, or will it not rather show that we have not benefited by the lessons the war was sent to teach us, and are not worthy of those who gave up not only social pleasures, but all that is dear in life, and life itself—to die for the betterment of their country and mankind.

I am proud to be associated with the "insignificant minority" whose "protest carries no weight," according to Sir Arthur Stanley, although I am only an independent member of the nursing profession, and do not belong to any of the well-known nursing societies who voiced the protest.

Yours faithfully,

A HUMBLE MEMBER OF THE
NURSING PROFESSION.

[Do not let us forget that it is the so-called "insignificant minority" who have during the past quarter of a century found upwards of £20,000 to further professional aspirations and to fight the bitter opposition of the Nursing Schools to the organization of Trained Nursing by the State; an opposition paid for out of public money! Nor that the hospital managers and their Matrons, who are now thrusting forward the College of Nursing Company's Bill, are financing the whole scheme on charity. In the opinion of these autocrats we may be "insignificant," but we are not paupers, and do not intend to be legislated for as such.—Ed.]

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

We have been in communication with a few women journalist friends, on the question of the "Suppress Press." "Kernels" from their replies are instructive.

A Woman Journalist writes: "I always read *The British Journal of Nursing* with relish—such a relief after all the twaddle I have to produce. I am deeply in sympathy with your point of view over the Victory Ball, and marvel that the Matrons cannot realise how the association of nurses with such a function cheapens them and their work in the eyes of the public."

Another Journalist writes: "I fear I can do nothing to help to place the truth before our readers—unfortunately we have to write to order when on the permanent staff of a paper, but you will note "the draught" *re* Victory Ball. It was, indeed, a shame to beg for our splendid nurses from *such a crowd*, after all their devotion through the war; believe me you have my sympathy, and if I were an editor I should have great pleasure in expressing it, but we little people in Grub Street have no power."

A third Fellow Journalist says: "I showed your letter to our editor—no go! 'We' can't afford to offend those in power'! . . ."

A Country Matron writes: "Apparently the College Matrons do approve of the Victory Ball ethics for our profession, as so far, not one of them has repudiated it. It is this lack of courage on their part under an Executive of men which inspires us with distrust."

"A Lancashire Lass" writes: "I have attended meetings in Lancashire about the College and the Nation's Fund, and we are always told we are to be self-governing, but I note that Lord Shuttleworth (who is not a trained nurse) is to be President of the East Lancashire Centre of the Nation's Fund, which is to finance the College, and Mr. H. M. Henyon is to be assistant organising secretary. 'Those who hold the purse strings call the tune'; we Lancashire lassies know that; the fact is quite apparent that in spite of Miss Sparshott's statement to the contrary 'that laymen have nothing to do with the administration' they—as you proved—control it. The more money these people extract from the public in our name, the more dangerous to personal liberty the position becomes. It is to be hoped Lancashire nurses realise the situation."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

January 4th.—State what you know about the effect of taking the following drugs: Cocaine and morphine; and how the patients should be nursed.

January 11th.—State what you know about the conveyance of infection by insect carriers. Name the diseases which may be caused in this way, and the insects responsible in each case.

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