

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 PUBLIC CONSCIENCE IS AWAKENING.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I and many of my friends have followed with sincere interest your long and gallant fight to obtain justice for Nurses and greatly needed protection for the public, and I have done what little I could to aid your endeavours. Will you therefore permit me, at this crisis, to speak quite frankly to you and your wide circle of readers? Coming down to bedrock, what does the Registration movement mean? Surely it is simply a fight for the human rights of the employed against the efforts of their Hospital employers to keep them in a state of servitude—to overwork and underpay them and finally to sweat their labour to produce large sums of money for the upkeep of the hospitals under the grossly abused name of Charity. The public conscience is awaking to this fact, and so you have had wonderful unanimity expressed in favour of Registration in both Houses of Parliament. But I do hope you will recognise that this is merely lip-service. The House of Commons unanimously accepted the Bill promoted by the employed. The House of Lords have by a majority of three to one accepted the Bill for the aggrandisement of the College of Nursing—that is to say of the employers. The Government will, according to custom, sit on the fence until they are forced to come off. I prophesy because I know.

Now, Madam, let me point the way out. Labour had just the same fight to wage as the Nurses have had. Labour only won because it formed every section of workers into Trade Unions; and Nurses will never get justice and fair play until they follow the same wise policy. I have taken the trouble to make extensive inquiries into the matter and it may surprise you to learn, as it has surprised my friends, that there are at least One Hundred Thousand women in this country who now have the Parliamentary vote, who are or who have been trained Nurses, and who, it is certain, still feel a strong interest in the welfare of their old profession. I feel confident that the great majority if not all of those women have some influence in their immediate social circles. Many of them, I find, have considerable influence. All of them have tongues and can use them! So I believe that few of them, if they chose to use that influence, could bring up less than ten other voters to the poll at a Parliamentary election. Perhaps few people realise what one million votes, properly organised, could do at a General Election. To exercise their full influence the Nurses should attach themselves to one of the political parties, and naturally the Labour Party would be the best for them to join. For the moment the Nurses know, or should know,

the names of those members of the House of Commons who are now attempting to wreck their Bill in that House. Whoever they are, whether private members or in the Government, I advise Nurses at once to start organising in the constituencies those gentlemen represent to bring about their defeat at the next election—and that election is coming sooner than most people seem to expect. Please accept my great interest in your work as my excuse for this lengthy letter, and believe me,

Your obedient servant, POLITICIAN.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM.—As no good end will be attained by continued correspondence on a subject which can never be demonstrated by argument, I scarcely like again to trespass on your valuable space, every inch of which should be conserved at this time for the All-important subject of "State Registration." Miss Beilby's long letter, however, has a haunting pessimism suggestive of disappointment, and one longs to help in some way or other! "Mankind comes to me by many paths, and by *whatsoever* path he comes, I welcome him: for all paths are mine."—When we get distorted ideas of ourselves or the good glad world around us, does the fault not lie with ourselves? One of the many lessons of the War, surely, was that our happiness, or the reverse, was the *direct* result of our mental attitude toward life. Hence the reason we quote the simple creed of "Love to God and one another" as a sound working basis. If our spiritual eyes are opened we see the Divine in *every man*; and that everyone *is* following the path which leads him to his conception of God.

I have spent half a lifetime in tending the sick, the wounded, and the dying, but have *never* seen the anguish nor the bitterness Miss Beilby quotes!! Britons are not built that way! Besides which we gave our bravest and our best for a World's Salvation, and no selfish regret mars the nobility of that sacrifice—"Greater love hath no man."

One hesitates to lift the curtain of the death chamber, in which one is called to watch and wait, but in the calm majesty of death there are *no terrors*; because the Divine in us gives perfect assurance, and we are the channels of that trust to others. Death is but the gate to that other sphere where *all* we have striven after here will be realised and perfected. It is all so simple! and only puny ideas make it abstruse and difficult. If we bring ourselves into harmony with God by realising and affirming our oneness with Him, then perfect assurance follows as a psychological fact. We then find the perfect in the imperfect; the Eternal in the temporal; the Divine in the human; and the Infinite lies all around us in "the Common things of life." Not what we believe counts, but what we are, when our turn comes to pass over.

A. E. MACDONALD (Sister).

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