

dancing at such a solemn time seemed like a desecration of the graves of our dead.

As for the professed object of the ball—to raise funds for the "Nation's Fund for Nurses"—I should be glad if you, as the accredited representative of the nursing profession, would tell me what it means. It is difficult for a member of the outside public to find out any details about it. Is it a charity? Is it meant to help nurses who have fallen on evil days? Or what is it? Where does the money go? And who administers it? I should have thought that the management of a "Nation's Fund for Nurses" would have been in the hands of a committee of representative nurses, but I cannot find out that it is so. That may, however, be due to my not knowing where to look for the information I desire, and I should be very grateful if you would enlighten my ignorance.

Yours, &c.,

CATHERINE FURLEY SMITH.

[These details have, as far as we know, not been made public; "representative nurses" have no voice in the organization of the Fund.—ED.]

#### KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A fourth woman journalist replies to our letter: "It is a pity the Food Controller winks the other eye where the rich are concerned, they have fared sumptuously all through the war—but my work has shown me the seamy side, and there has been real starvation of some worthy middle class people, the poorer professional classes (e.g., the clergy), and after four years of war the Bishop of London has realised the misery of his clergy! These remarks, in reply to your letter, are prompted by the magnificent feeds provided for journalists at Lady Cowdray's mansion, in support of the Nation's Fund for Nurses. Before the Garden Party at St. James's Palace in the summer, there was a "Press" tea at No. 16, Carlton House Terrace—every dainty in abundance, and peaches, at 5s. each, *in piles!* Then came the luncheon feast for the members of the Empire Press Union, when the "actual want" of Britain's needy nurses was recommended for publicity in the Dominion Press, and votes of thanks for "kind hospitality" were offered with unctuous rectitude by the replete persons present. Then recently there was a repetition of such hospitality after the Memorial Service for Dr. Elsie Inglis—which savoured more of a 'wake' than of sorrow-stricken friends—apparently appetite was not impaired by grief! How about the 'needy' members of the Press? Can you expect them to straightway depart filled to repletion and snap at the hands which feeds them, by opposing a scheme (calculated to depreciate nursing prestige, I own) subsidised by well-paid advertisements? Such is not human nature as we know it in the newspaper world.

"The system is rotten, but it pays. But how is it possible for the wealthy to procure all this costly and delicious food for innumerable guests

—when we workers cannot obtain butter, sugar, cakes, jam, sweets, fruit and wine—to say nothing of two substantial dinners a day and plenty of coal?"

[These are conundrums we are entirely unable to answer.—ED.]

From a "Little Matron":—"I can assure you that many of us 'little Matrons' quite realise the depreciation of our independence under the College Caucus, and its local feelers. Quite recently the 'big Matrons' started a centre here. The President is Matron of a hospital which for years has made large profits out of the private nursing staff, and we already hear of questions asked as to the standards of staffs in the various nurses' homes on the co-op. system. The least these big-wigs can do is to at once discontinue nurse sweating; it will then be time to make provision for nurses on a charity basis. After all this tall talk, Sir Arthur Stanley must tackle the nurse training schools which run private staffs for profit, instead of placing their Matrons on his Council. The first bit of work the Council should do is to have the balance sheets of hospital private nursing departments before them."

Army Sister says:—"One thing is surely a thing of the past—the chaperone has toppled off her perch, and neither nurses nor V.A.D.'s will put her together again. In my training days we should have been *squandered* if we had been seen out with the medical staff. Now young V.A.D.'s dine and wine and theatre with their convalescent officer patients, and no one says them nay. Hospital discipline is a thing of the past!"

From Manchester comes the following expression of opinion:—"With the type of generosity peculiar to itself, the War Office has just issued an A.C.I. increasing the uniform allowance paid to all nurses appointed on the date (January 18th, 1918) of the A.C.I., or after it, from £8 per annum to £10. This increase, of course, will benefit no one, for now that demobilisation is a thing of the near future, it is not likely that more nurses will be appointed, while the thousands of nurses, who, for the last few years, have been paying for a good part of their uniform out of their own pockets, will receive no increase whatever. This is not the way to promote contentment among the members of the nursing services; but, perhaps, the "powers that be" do not think it necessary to do so, now that they will so soon be able to do without the nurses who have served them during the war."

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

##### QUESTION.

January 25th.—What premonitory symptoms would cause you to suspect the onset of eclampsia? What features does this disease present, and how would you deal with a case pending the arrival of a doctor?

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