

## 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.*

## NURSES MUST BE ALERT AND WATCHFUL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with particular interest the report of the Petition for a Supplemental Charter made by the British Red Cross Society. I am sending for a copy of the same.

The whole thing appears to be another move to undermine the position of the trained nurse. It is diluting labour with a vengeance. The same thing has been done in all industries during the war and is one of the main causes of the strikes and disputes in the country at the present time.

A small strike is taking place in this district at the present time, brought about by the employers refusing to recognise the Union of the workmen. The different methods resorted to in order to break into the Union are amazing. I am not attempting here to hold a brief for the strikers, but I am hoping that the analogy will enable someone to see that the latest move of the B.R.C.S. is only another plank in their platform, built up in order to control the nurses of this country.

The humanitarian nature of a nurse's work would never allow her to resort to a "strike," but, apart from the various organizations of trained nurses, every individual nurse will have to prove her individuality and use all her influence if we are to checkmate our would-be governors.

In this district—a busy manufacturing district—I am given to understand that the M.P. regularly receives instructions (or requests) from the employers, as to how he shall vote in the House, but I am afraid that he receives few letters from the workers.

Nurses must show that they are alert and watchful both in their own interests and in the interests of the community, of which they are valuable members.

I am, Madam, yours faithfully,  
M. DUGDALE.

## THE HOUSING PROBLEM MUST BE SOLVED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been engaged for some time at an Infant Welfare Centre, and find the mothers, generally speaking, are anxious for trained advice; but it is noticeable that those who require it most—the poorest and most ignorant—are the least ready to seek it, the most difficult to "get at."

It seems certain that before this class can be properly reached the housing problem must be solved. It is unreasonable to expect a woman to do the household washing and cleaning, shopping and cooking, and at the same time care properly

for a large family. Those above five are at school, but the toddlers are around her with no one to take them out. The whole family may be living in two rooms at the top of a house, and every drop of water must be fetched from downstairs in jugs, and then be boiled over a lamp or perhaps a gas stove.

To my mind crèches and more crèches are an urgent necessity not only to give the mothers some relief, but also for their educative value in good habits for the children.

Think what it would mean if they learnt self-respect and cleanliness!

The more I think of it, the surer I am that education must go hand in hand with housing reform. The first generation of educated children (I don't mean book knowledge), means the last generation of ignorant parents, and should make the slum landlord as he is, an impossibility. What a splendid work for trained nurses—Prevention!

Yours, &c.,

V. M. COBBETT.

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A Scottish Nurse:—"I did not join the College although pressed by Matron to do so, because the Medical Superintendent of our hospital was practically Matron, and I don't want to be controlled by him now I have left Scotland. I quite realise we shall never be free if we join the College. Why should trained nurses be the only class of workers to be kept down for ever? Most of our characters are completely ruined by hospital suppression, and in such noble work as nursing the sick it ought to be quite the reverse."

Old Guard: "I suppose our Bill is dead now. At least let us be thankful it died an honourable death and did not commit suicide. The 'Anti' Matrons had a grand opportunity to show their contrition for having opposed State Registration of Nurses for so long, and the genuineness of their conversion. What a pity they were not big enough to take it, but allowed the green-eyed monster to bar the way. They will never have such another chance to 'make good.'"

## COMING EVENT.

Sept. 4th.—Conference of Women's Organisations to consider the Representation of Women in the League of Nations. Council Chamber, Caxton Hall, Westminster. 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., and 2 to 4 p.m.

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

## QUESTIONS.

August 23rd.—How would you prepare, and apply, an extension for a case of compound fracture of the femur? What precautions would you take?

August 30th.—What advice would you give in a case of chronic phthisis which had to be nursed at home?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)