

## 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 notice there is a protest in your issue of August 23rd by a correspondent who evidently distrusts the present activity of the British Red Cross Society in its endeavour to compete with the Ministry of Health.

However, since we have at last succeeded in gaining this urgent reform, in spite of strenuous opposition from people who considered that the National Health should be left to the care of voluntary societies, I think we may regard the petition of the B.R.C.S. with equanimity.

It is one thing to "organise examinations and grant certificates," but quite a different thing to get the people who appoint the officials to recognise the certificate.

But, just because of this attempt to make the training of Public Health Nurses as precarious as lack of standardisation makes that of the Hospital Nurse, I think all Public Health Nurses should welcome the scheme announced by the Minister of Health, which allows for improving the standard, or classifying for the different departments as the work of the Ministry grows. The one great point we should welcome is that we shall have a standard; that, as in other professions, the pupil must be of good education and will receive theoretical training first, and then practical training on a good foundation.

Nothing could raise our status more than the advent of standard qualifications (whatever they should be) with such a good foundation as suggested by Dr. Addison.

I should like to remind "Trained Nurses in Public Health Work" that in the eyes of the Government there is no such thing as a "trained" nurse, and although they have succeeded in gaining the approval of medical officers for the certificated Hospital Nurse, in lieu of one specially trained for the work, they would do well now to regard themselves as pioneers. There are quite enough nurses in the Service who are competent to give the practical training that will assist Dr. Addison to carry out his admirable scheme for a National Nursing Service.

I claim that we have reached a new era in nursing in which preventative work will be fundamental. The old era closed with the suicidal action of Nurses who supported the wreckers of their own Bill for emancipation.

Serfs they are; serfs they have always been; and serfs they will be. Who wishes to be irrevocably chained to such serfdom? Since they did not, or could not, lead the way, an opportunity is ours as a section, we must grasp it.

Whose fault is it that there is no *standard* of nursing which the Minister of Health could accept as a foundation for his nursing service? Obviously it reflects upon those who prevented us having a State Register, but the fact remains the same—we are without it.

I suggest that the pioneers of the new era look to themselves since the octopus of the "Halo" and "ministering angel" fame is sending its tentacles in their direction. We do indeed need to be "alert and watchful" until this monster has succumbed to the force of Progress and is buried in the growth of the new era.

Yours faithfully,

ONWARD.

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Old Guard:—"I am desperately disappointed that after such bright prospects the Session has passed without our Bill receiving the Royal Assent, and cannot understand the action of the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd., in wrecking it. Its members have repeatedly and publicly stated that there was no difference in principle between us, only in matters of detail, but that they considered their Bill more likely to get through than ours. Well, our Bill got its chance, and proved triumphantly that they were wrong. It passed its second reading with what one Member of Parliament (I was present) called a unanimous chorus of approval. Representatives of the different parties got up, and warmly supported it, and there was not even a division. Then it passed through Committee with agreement between the members representing the interests of the Central Committee and the College, and with the assistance of the Minister of Health. All seemed well. Then the Council of the College let loose the vials of its wrath. Its attitude was, If we can't get our own Bill through, no other Bill shall be passed. Let the sick suffer, let the nurses suffer. The Central Committee's Bill shan't go through. Let us waste the precious minutes of its Report Stage. Let us circularise every member, and order her to get Members to wreck the Bill, and they did. But what a contemptible policy, and what a pitiful exhibition! What a spectacle for the world at large!

"'Dilly, dilly, dilly, come and be killed,' said the Council of the College to their members, and they flocked into the slaughter-house. They got what they deserved."

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

## QUESTIONS.

September 13th.—In what circumstances may delirium arise in cases of infectious disease? What form may the delirium assume? What precautionary measures may have to be adopted?

September 20th.—What are the causes of spinal caries? How would you nurse a case of this kind?

September 27th.—What is hyper-pyrexia? What means are available for its reduction?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)