

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 ETHICS OF TRADE UNIONISM.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—A writer in a recent issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING takes exception to an invitation issued to Matrons and Doctors by the Irish Nurses' Union in connection with a Whist Drive and Dance held to raise funds to start a Nursing Journal in Ireland. The objection seems to be that by inviting the co-operation of Matrons and Doctors we were not exhibiting the independence which is supposed to be the essence of Trade Unionism. Is the Union to take this comment as a tacit admission that Matrons and Doctors either cannot or will not co-operate with Nurses in any undertaking, unless the latter are willing to relinquish their independence and become mere under-strappers?

I do not know quite what is the writer's idea of the essence of Trade Unionism, but the main principle, as I know it, of all Trades Unions, embodies in its best and widest sense the true spirit of democracy, and I see no reason why Nurses should not invite the co-operation of Matrons and Doctors in promoting the growth of this spirit in the two professions which are so closely allied.

I am, yours faithfully,

ETHEL O'NEILL,

Vice-President.

Dublin.

APPLES OF SODOM.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I was present at the Meeting held in King George's Hall, on Friday, and was amazed at the effrontery of the lady who spoke on behalf of the College of Nursing, Ltd. She wants to know what you have done for the nurses, does she?

Years of toilsome spade work, the careful planting of the seed, the nurture and protection of the young tree from the bitter blast of opposition, watching with never ceasing vigilance the blossom and the gradual maturing of the fruit, till at last it neared perfection and was ready for the plucking, and then—like our first parents, there were certain people who "said that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, and they took of the fruit thereof"—*the luscious fruit.*

There are such things as Apples of Sodom.

The lady only asked, I believe, what you had done; she must excuse me if I furnish her with a little extra information.

Yours faithfully,

ONE OF THE MANY.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Private Nurse: "Why does the College send incompetent understudies to try to wreck our meetings? This was their policy in the House of Commons when our Bill was under discussion. Why do the College Council Matrons not come out into the open and have the courage of their opinions? The truth is they dare not face the music—and no wonder; the rank and file can no longer be bamboozled. Thousands of nurses—especially in the Army—joined the College to protect themselves against the competition of the V.A.D., and now they have been betrayed, in Military Service and Public Health Work. Every penny paid to the College tightens the halter round our professional throats. Join the Nurses' Trade Union."

Canadian Nurse: "When on active duty in Europe I watched carefully the registration policy of the College of Nursing, and came to the conclusion that the 'anti's' on its Council control the situation. Anyway, the whole bunch have cut at the root of effective self-government for the profession in Britain. What astonishes us Canadians is the lamb-like attitude of the average nurse in England. She appears quite unable to realise the danger of subscribing to a Constitution which deprives her of self-defence, and appears content to be hand-fed and generally done for. We were also shocked at the miserable standard of salaries current in English hospitals. Poverty has apparently sapped self-respect. On the other hand, nothing can be more encouraging than the stand of the organised nurses, who are upholding high ethical standards in spite of personal disadvantages. When are we all going to meet again in our grand International? I was at Buffalo in 1901, and came away a different woman."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.**QUESTIONS.**

November 15th.—What are the probable causes of otorrhoea, and how would you nurse such a case? What complications might arise, and how would you recognise them?

November 22nd.—What are the functions of the teeth? What method of caring for them do you advocate—for a school child, for a healthy adult, for a sick person? What untoward conditions may result from defective teeth?

November 29th.—What treatment have you seen given in a case of ex-ophthalmic goitre, and how would you nurse such a case?

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