

## 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.*

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE REAL THING.

*Member of College.*—"I am told that, as I am a member of the College, there is no need to register over again—that the College register will be more select than the State Register. If this is so, what is the use of the Registration Act? Surely registration by the State confers some privilege; one gets so confused."

[The State Register confers legal status upon the nurses whose names appear upon it and provides them with the protected title of "Registered Nurse." Their Certificate under the seal of the Council is conclusive evidence in all courts of law of the fact stated in the certificate. The Act provides for registered nurses a protected uniform and badge. No unregistered nurse will be legally a member of the Nursing Profession. Thus, although State Registration is not compulsory, no nurse who wishes to practice in a professional capacity can afford to be unregistered. We advise you, therefore, to apply for admission to the State Register as soon as the rules are agreed and printed.

Admission to the so-called Register of the College of Nursing, Ltd., carries with it no legal status—however "select" the list of persons compiled may be. It is simply a list of persons who have subscribed one guinea to have their names enrolled as members of the College Company, and it is high time interested persons ceased to mislead nurses on these matters. There is now only one form of registration of any practical value to trained nurses, and that is to be controlled by the General Nursing Councils under the Nursing Acts. Save your guineas for the *real thing*.—ED.]

## THE SORROWS OF JULIET.

*A London Hospital Nurse:* "I observe that the *Daily Telegraph* keeps a discreet silence in its sickening appeal, on the suicide of poor Enid Potts, after complaining of being overworked at the London Hospital. Surely this true tragedy would have been more convincing than the "Sorrows of Juliet."

## PENNY PATRONAGE.

*A Lincolnshire Matron:* "How can hospital committees expect to get probationers, when the papers have been full of appeals and advertisements for indigent nurses? Are girls of good education going to enter such employment? Certainly not. Parents naturally surmise that it isn't good enough. Without ceasing, these degrading appeals have now been going on for two-and-a-half years. The lack of ethical standards of the College of Nursing, Ltd., has done untold harm. During the past fortnight an order has been sent down to the Matrons of large hospitals

from headquarters in London to appeal in the local Press for these doles. This is being done in Lincoln and throughout the county. It makes one ashamed of one's uniform. Our only hope is State Registration, then those of us who loathe penny patronage can take united action.

*Matron-Housekeeper.*—"It depends on the size of the Training School whether a Sister-Tutor is beneficial or not. I have always taught the theory of practical nursing to my own probationers. If a Tutor is appointed here my position will be that of Matron-Housekeeper. In a London hospital recently the Sister-Tutor explained that she had taken a higher place in the exams. of their Alma Mater than the Matron, and had been promoted to be Sister, a post the Matron was not considered qualified to fill! How about nursing ethics and discipline in that institution?"

[We imagine this is an isolated case of disloyalty.—ED.]

*Miss K. E. Luard, R.R.C.,* writes: "In view of the just claim of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING to stand for truth and fairness and to lead the Nursing Profession, it is a little difficult to understand a statement on page 63 of the issue of January 31st, which gives a strange impression of belittling the great work of the members of the 'V.A.D.'"

"This statement follows on an irrefutable claim that the nursing of really sick people of any class in their own homes cannot safely be done by unqualified nurses, a claim that no one who knows anything about illness in working-class houses in the country can deny. But the article goes on to say that 'V.A.D.s proved a very costly luxury during the war!'" Surely the writer cannot realise that practically the whole burden of the care of the thousands of convalescents throughout the war was taken off the shoulders of the Professional Nurse by the V.A.D.s. A great deal of the expense of nurses, pantry-maids, cooks, kitchen-maids, and even charwomen was saved to the Nation by voluntary unpaid work in hundreds of Auxiliary Hospitals, carried through by these patriotic women, 'of social position' anxious, in however dull or humble a way, to take some share in the Great Cause for which their brothers, husbands and sons were giving their limbs and lives. Can all this be fairly called either a luxury, or a costly luxury? If these V.A.D.'s had not come forward, the work would still have had to be done and enormous sums would have been paid in wages and salaries while the supply of trained nurses for the acute cases and for civilian nursing would have run out."

[\*Nursing V.A.D.s, immature and inexperienced girls, on foreign service, cost £160 per annum, and in hundreds of cases deprived professional nurses of active service with our armies.—ED.]

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

## QUESTIONS.

*February 28th.*—How would you care for the mouth, the hair, and the nails of a helpless patient?

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