

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 AND THE HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT BILL

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—The enclosed is the reply to my letter to the Minister of Labour. I have also written to our M.P. Hoping our letters may have weight, and with every good wish for the cause.

I remain, sincerely yours,
ELIZABETH THOMPSON, R.N.S.

[COPY OF REPLY.]

Montagu House, Whitehall,
London, S.W. 1.
April 13th, 1920.

MADAM,—In reply to your letter of April 11th on the subject of the Hours of Employment Bill, I am directed by the Minister of Labour to inform you that in the application of the Bill to the Nursing Service, every precaution will be taken to ensure that nothing is done which would prejudice the Service.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient servant,
W. EADY.

Sister Elizabeth Thompson,
The Registered Nurses' Society,
431, Oxford Street, W. 1.

[The more private nurses who express their opinions to the Minister of Labour the better.—ED.]

FREEDOM FOR NURSING PRACTITIONERS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—You ask an expression of opinion on hours of employment for private nurses but I think your own opinion states the matter exactly, *i.e.* that, "private nurses are private practitioners, and that therefore a give-and-take system is inevitable."

As a private nurse of some years' standing. I know it would be quite impossible to limit one's hours on duty, nor would it be fair to our patrons, who are really very good to us! Therefore, to my mind, no other system can be evolved which would not amount to interference with the liberty of the subject, in the case of the trained nurse, who, having "won her spurs," practises on her own account. I think you will also agree that the ranks of private nurses are never too full to admit every trained woman to whom this branch appeals?

In institution work the need for shorter hours is very great and very urgent, and although private nurses have their hardships, too, long hours is not one of these, save in exceptional, and wholly justifiable circumstances.

Regretting this too long letter and appreciating always, with thousands of other workers, your helpful interest in every branch of our noble service.

I am, dear Editor, yours very truly,
A. E. MACDONALD (Sister).
Impérial Hotel, Paris.

PROHIBIT "SLEEPING DUTY."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—In reply to your request for the opinion of Private Nurses regarding an eight-hour day, I beg to say that I do not think it practicable. If patients were seriously ill it would necessitate the employing of three nurses, and very few could afford that. What I would suggest (if I may be allowed to do so) is that "sleeping duty" should be strictly forbidden, and on no account should Private Nurses be asked to sleep in the bedroom of their patient. A twelve-hour day, with three hours off duty, or even two hours, could always be arranged to meet the requirements of the average cases. I am a Private Nurse and expect to take up that work again when I am demobilised, and the two things I hope to see abolished under the Registration Act are "Sleeping duty," and sleeping in the bedroom of patients.

I am, Madam,
Yours faithfully,
E. P. TODD,
Sister Q.A.I.M.N.S.R.

"Torwood," Evelyn Gardens,
Cavehill Road, Belfast.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Miss N. Copeland, M.R.B.N.A. :—"I am sure we should lose work by the adoption of an eight-hours day, and the untrained woman would be employed more even than she is at present."

Miss Amy Walker, London :—"I have had the happiest experience during my private nursing. Mothers and fathers have been most grateful, husbands and wives also, and during convalescence I have enjoyed delightful treats, motoring in many parts of England, trips to the sea-side, books to read, and made to feel quite one of the family. All this good feeling would be done away with if we nursed by the clock."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

QUESTIONS.

April 24th.—What is meant by (a) cross infection, and (b) concurrent double infection? How may cross infection arise? What measures are adopted in hospital for its prevention? Give some examples of concurrent double infection.

May 1st.—State (1) How to organise an eight hours' day for nurses in hospitals, (2) How to organise a forty-eight hours' week for nurses. State (a) the number of beds in ward, (b) the number of nurses required for duty in ward. State hours on and off duty.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)