

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.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have always maintained that on each individual nurse rests the responsibility for the betterment and upholding of the profession; some have more time than others, some make more time. Lately, I have been in a back-water but the Journal keeps one up to date, and the last numbers have given much food for thought:—

(1) The unprofessional advertisement of the Scottish Nursing Council for a Registrar! Who can know nursing standards but a nurse? Besides, why should any but a nurse get the salary offered? It is nurses' money and would any other apply if the salary offered were the usual pittance?

(2) The alertness of the Professional Union of Trained Nurses (Glasgow Branch) in forwarding an emphatic protest to Edinburgh is worthy of note; but I have not yet seen any mention of the Scottish Nurses' Association action. Their delegates must have been over-ruled; yet surely the members do not accept the theory, that in Scotland no nurse is to be found with sufficient brains or acumen to fill the post the English Nursing Council is offering to her professional sister? Scottish nurses must refuse to accept this "lay" stroke or more trouble will follow. I await the next B.J.N. with impatience.

Yours truly,

J. B. N. PATERSON.

Ardenhurst,
West Kilbride,
Ayrshire.

[As Miss Paterson knows this journal was the first to point out that the position of Registrar to a Nursing Council authorised by Parliament to organise nursing education, examine and register trained nurses, and to maintain discipline throughout the profession, could only be adequately filled by a highly trained nurse with administrative ability, and this opinion is, we believe, shared by every nurse representative on the English Council. We sincerely hope that the nurses on the Scottish and Irish Councils will take a determined stand on this principle, and insist that a well-qualified professional woman shall be appointed to the position of Registrar; if not, with all due deference to these ladies, they will have failed in their duty to the profession at large, and as Miss Paterson writes, "more trouble will follow."—ED.]

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

ITALIAN TRIBUTE.

Sister Carey.—"It is a pity wreaths of flowers placed at the foot of the Cavell Memorial die so soon—some have lovely words attached. The

following inscription was attached to the wreath contributed last week by soldiers of the Italian Army:—

"To the gentle English heroine whose sublime martyrdom has rendered the name of her fatherland sacred throughout the world.

FROM ITALIAN SOLDIERS."

Captain Garibaldi, the principal member of the deputation, who took part in the ceremony, is a grandson of the Italian Liberator, who was one of the heroes of the English people in the middle of the last century."

A VERY TYRANNICAL PROCEEDING.

R.B.N.A. Member.—I note that Lord Burnham is reported in the *Daily Mail* to have said at the unveiling of the Edith Cavell Memorial at Paris that "Tyranny, whatever colours it wears cannot exist side by side with a free Press." Proof positive, if true, that his organ, the *Daily Telegraph* is not a paper which can be placed in that category, to judge by the merciless manner in which he excluded our letters repudiating his shilling doles for nurses; a very tyrannical proceeding."

THE LAWS OF NATURE FORBID.

A Certified Midwife writes: "I notice that a speaker at the annual meeting of the Clapham Maternity Hospital said that 'midwifery' for some reason did not appeal largely to the educated classes.' She gave as the reason that 'women would not undertake work that interfered with their week-ends or with their nights in bed.' In my opinion they are quite right not to do so. Of course, in single-handed posts where the calls are infrequent, the midwife must be prepared to answer a call at any time, but where several midwives work from a centre the irregular night work which is so trying, and so prejudicial to a midwife's health might be greatly lessened if not abolished altogether, by proper organisation. It is a foolish and wrong policy to conserve the health of one section of the community by breaking down that of another, and that is what happens when midwives have constantly broken nights. Where the midwifery work is of any size there should be a regular day and night staff, and the day staff should only be called up when there is an exceptional rush of cases. Nurses and midwives who know something of the laws of nature know that if they defy them they will eventually have to pay the penalty, and consequently do not take up work under conditions which court a break-down."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

June 26th.—Name all the diseases you know which may be disseminated by insect carriers, mentioning in each case the insect which is responsible, and stating how the infection is introduced into the human body.

July 3rd.—What are the causes of swelling of the legs (1) during pregnancy, (2) after labour? How would you deal with such cases?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)