

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 "COLLEGE" REGISTRATION GUINEA.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I have received so many letters—mostly from nurses unknown to me—agreeing with my letter on this subject, that I ask them to accept this acknowledgment. Many state their reasons for joining, which, taken collectively, mean "they leapt before they looked." Blind acceptance of Matron's advice (who, probably, had not read the Rules of the Company), "thought it was the thing to do," and fear of a State examination if found unregistered, account for many of the 16,000. To those who have escaped, or those caught who now realise their mistake, I would say, "Save others—send the JOURNAL on to those 'who sit in darkness.'"

One nurse says she will not re-claim her guinea nor register under the State. "Why throw good money after bad?" she asks; "besides, I shall soon retire." "Why make any unselfish effort in this world?" is my reply. Because our employers have impeded State Registration for thirty years, so that it will be little use to many of this generation, is there any reason why should we not help to build up the profession for those who come after? By re-claiming the "misapprehension" guinea, the nurse puts her foot on an unprofessional method of obtaining money.

Another nurse sends me the College reply to her request for the return of her guinea. Briefly, she is to apply in due time to the General Nursing Council, pay their registration fee, send the receipt to the College Company, who will then (I suppose also, in due time!) refund up to £1 1s. (and I suppose return the receipt, else the nurse might be in another hole). Her suggested reply is as follows (she is certainly awake now!): "Madam,—I note what you say about applying to the G.N.C. and forwarding registration fee; but that is not the agreement I entered into with the College. I was automatically and without further fee to be placed on the State Register, which the College cannot claim to have done if I have to pay meantime a second Registration fee and undertake the work of Registration and recovery of first fee myself. Even postage has to be considered these days. If the conditions under which the money was accepted cannot be fulfilled, the money should be returned at once."

Quite right, nurse! Keep a firm hand and make them fulfil their pledge or pay up at once, grateful that they have got off without damages.

I am, &c.,

J. B. N. PATERSON.

THE SHORTAGE OF NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I think some of the reasons for shortage of nurses to-day are:—(1) The many temporary war nurses have seen the nursing conditions of probationers and therefore will not consent to train; (2) most people have tried nursing during the war and probably tired of it; (3) the varied vocations for a modern girl. A few years ago nursing was the only profession for a woman; (4) long hours in hospital, probably 10 or 11 hours a day on the feet, as a probationer is not allowed to sit down unless on a visiting-day when she makes bandages, &c. Even with the slight increase of "off duty" time a great many of the London hospital nurses work 60 to 70 hours a week. Lectures, classes and examinations are taken in "off duty" time. This leaves some days with no freedom; (5) bad housing—more than one bed in a room; (6) poor food or food that never varies during the three or four years' training; (7) small salaries while training and insufficient for responsible posts when trained; (8) enormous number of rules and regulations when "on" and "off" duty; (9) everyone knows that during this shortage of nurses those who do nurse will have to do double or more work. Also the type of girl must be deteriorating, for Matrons cannot be so particular if there is no selection.

The chief of these drawbacks to a nurse in training is the long hours causing too great a fatigue for recreation.

Yours faithfully,

V. H. HEDGES, R.N.S.

REPLY TO CORRESPONDENT.

A Reader of the B.J.N.—We shall have pleasure in forwarding your donation to Miss E. M. Newman, whose appeal was recently published in this Journal. Her address is C.E.Z. Mission Dispensary, Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Sister B.—I am very glad to note that the press are now admitted to the meetings of the General Nursing Council. It is a wise decision. I read the report in the B.J.N. with pleasure and profit.

A Deluded Nurse.—"I thought I was on the State Register when I paid the College my guinea; now I find I am not, nor likely to be. The College ought to be made to 'deliver the goods.'"

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

QUESTIONS.

August 21st.—What special points should be observed in caring for (a) the blind; (b) the deaf?

August 28th.—What measures would you take in the case of a woman in labour suffering from convulsions pending the arrival of a medical practitioner?

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