

## 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 RE-EDUCATION OF THE DISORDERS OF SPEECH.

*Miss Mary Thornton.*—"I am hurrying to America (on the *Savoie*) just as I hurried from London (I shall hope to hurry into Heaven at the last). In reply to your question. My work during the war period has been that of re-education of the soldiers, who because of penetrating shell wounds were suffering from Aphasia and kindred disorders of speech. We have had some wonderful results, and I consider I have had a great opportunity—it seems to me, the greatest opportunity of any woman in the armies. I have had about every variety of facial and head wounds that could interfere with language in its various expressions. My visits to England, France and Italy were for the purpose of observing to what extent they had carried the re-education of these cases."

## SURFACE NURSING.

*Miss J. McNeillie.* "Possibly everyone thought like myself there would be innumerable replies to the question, 'What is Surface Nursing?'"

[As this question deals primarily with the personal comfort of the patient, we regret we could not award a Prize last week. We shall insert the question again in the future and hope for better results.—ED.]

## TRIFLING WITH THE NATIONAL HEALTH.

*Queen's Nurse.*—"I note that it is proposed by the Joint Council of the B.R.C. and St. John to cover the country with a net of County Committees to improve the national health—in fact to assume the functions of the Health Ministry (without portfolio)! My experience during the war proved that the lack of professional representation on the Joint War Committee was most inimical to nursing interests and, in consequence, those of the patients. As far as I can gather in this county, it is not proposed to put one trained nurse on this County Committee; and we hear the scheme includes instituting a course of training for V.A.D.'s in child welfare work on the lines no doubt of the totally insufficient Red Cross Home Nursing Course. What right have these lay committees to provide half trained attendants for the poor? Surely all this work should be kept in the hands of the Health Minister, and a highly skilled staff, if national health is to be seriously protected. I do not find my ten years' experience of trained nursing, sanitation, and midwifery, has over-qualified me for my responsible duties. This question of V.A.D.'s dabbling in our work in districts, civil hospitals, convalescent homes, sanatoria and child welfare work is going to cause a revolution in the nursing

world. Let us hope the Health Ministry realises the danger of permitting the assumption of its functions by persons who are neither empowered by Parliament to assume them, nor qualified to do so."

## TAILS UP.

*Dublin Nurse.* "You are very right to say Dublin is dolorous, more so than even you know. There are grave happenings every day, and one wonders when the end will come. Work for private nurses is almost nil. So many people have left Ireland, and the travelling facilities to most of the West and South-west have gone. We can get nurses as far as Limerick, but on from there is the difficulty. Motor transit is ruinous and dangerous, so you can understand how few nurses are going to the country. Both Nursing Homes and Private Nurses are very hard hit. It is worse, much worse, than the war. Still we are trying to keep our tails up!"

## TWENTY YEARS TOO LATE.

*Irish International Nurses.* "As one of those who has attended more than one of the splendid meetings of the International Council of Trained Nurses I could not help smiling at the ignorance of would-be organisers of Nurses about our affairs when I read the report of a recent Conference held by the Irish Nurses' Union. Miss Bennett, Secretary of the Women Workers' Union, who presided, stated that a message of greeting had been received from the French Federation of Health Workers, and that she looked forward to the time when an international congress of trained nurses would be in existence, and she was proud to think that the Irish Nurses' Union as our first trade union founded for nurses, would claim the right to press that this congress should hold its first meeting in Ireland. Cannot you send Miss Bennett and the Secretary of the Irish Nurses' Union the Reports of the great International Council of Nurses which has done so much to bring the nurses of the world into touch with one another?"

[We have, as you suggest, forwarded the Reports of the historic International gatherings of Nurses to Miss Bennett; we feel sure they cannot fail to interest her—Buffalo 1901, Berlin 1904, Paris 1907, London 1909, Cologne 1912. At the last meeting the representatives of 23 countries took part in the Congress—and then, alas! the war. We have not yet forgotten the delightful Congress of Nurses held in Dublin in 1913, so wonderfully organised by the Irish Nurses' Association.—ED.]

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

## QUESTIONS.

*October 30th.*—What are the dangers of syphilis in the pregnant woman, and what is a nurse's duty in such cases?

*November 6th.*—What complications would you watch for in nursing an aged patient with fracture of Femur? Describe the nursing of such complications.

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