

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.

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—As a medical practitioner interested in the advancement of the nursing profession, I write to thank you for your outspoken leader on "The Hours of Employment Bill."

The adverse conditions, to which nurses have submitted for so many years, have at last been realised by the general community, and in consequence the profession has now fewer recruits than ever before.

London hospital authorities find that they must advertise for nurses in our Scottish papers. Evidently they are unable to staff their hospitals from the millions living around them, or perhaps they think that Scottish women do not know the value of money, and are more likely to be attracted by the miserable pittance they offer. I observe from your own advertisement columns that nurses with two years' fever training are offered salaries of £40, and that a staff nurse, with general training and experience in X-ray and electrical work, is offered £50. That is to say, that ladies are asked to work longer hours than tradesmen, to bear the responsibility of dealing with human life, and to incur unusual risks of contracting infectious or contagious disease; all for the salary that we pay our domestic servants. There are so many spheres of employment open to women to-day, that if the nursing profession is to secure the high quality of recruit it obtained in the past, then the whole nursing service must be made vastly more attractive.

It appears to me that nurses themselves are very much to blame for their poor conditions of service. Like medical men, they are either too proud or too indifferent to join a professional union or association, and consequently they are unable to engage in collective bargaining. It is imperative in the interests of the community that the nursing profession shall still bring to its ranks the best and most capable of our women. I, therefore, hope that nurses will never cease to agitate till they have "hours of duty" and salaries commensurate with those in the other professions.

M. D. (Glasgow).

STREET COLLECTIONS FOR NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I read with pleasure your able reply to Lieut.-Colonel Sir Richard Temple on the subject of street and other forms of charity collections for nurses.

I am sure you voice the feelings of the great majority of the Nursing Profession.

What an inducement to the higher educated (College or otherwise) women to enter the pro-

fession. In straitened circumstances you will be helped from a fund collected in the streets, or from the Nation's Fund for Nurses, which is a registered Charity under the War Charities Act!

It makes one blush for shame to think of it. I have to support myself and widowed mother by my own earnings, and should anything happen to me I would starve rather than accept a penny from any such source.

Yours sincerely,

J. ARMSTRONG (Queen's Nurse).
42, Westcraigs Road,
Harthill, Lanarkshire.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

THE VULGAR SCHEMES OF PROFESSIONAL CHARITY.

Queen's Nurse, London.—Will you permit me to express the hope that the third so-called Victory Ball held at the Albert Hall, on Armistice night, was for the benefit of the Fund of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, and *not* for the personal benefit of Queens' Nurses. I attended on that day the unveiling of the Cenotaph, and the Service in the Abbey—uplifting and lovely ceremonies—in harmony with our work for the sick and wounded and in memory of those we helped to "cross the bar." It would, I know, be very repugnant to the feeling of many Queens' Nurses, that dancing and drinking, and other forms of frivolity were permitted in London for their material interests. Our sacred work should not be contaminated by association with such functions as the Victory Ball. I know I express the feelings of many of my colleagues, and am sure you will permit us to dissociate ourselves from such methods of "Remembrance" of the years of tragedy associated with the war. Heroism, suffering, death, heart-break, these should be held in remembrance in all sobriety of spirit by the whole nation, and if the "Victory" attained by these glories and griefs is to be annually commemorated in any form, may the Queens' Nurses plead with our Queen that it shall express the noblest and most solemn feelings of which our great nation is capable; and that our high vocation of Nursing shall not be associated with the vulgar schemes of professional charity as heretofore."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

November 27th.—What congenital defects may be present in a newly born infant? What is the nurse's duty in regard to them?

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