

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 INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING AND THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF NURSES.
To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I was attracted by a letter in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, headed "A Charity-Ridden Profession."

May I point out that the charity-ridden position of nurses could be abolished if the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Professional Union of Trained Nurses, and the National Union of Trained Nurses, set themselves to secure better salaries for private nurses, district nurses, hospital nurses, and public health nurses. All these associations have offices, secretaries, chairmen and committees, but the economic position of working nurses is persistently ignored.

I am more than surprised that no schedule of salaries has been drawn up by nursing societies. The salary of a certificated nurse is much less than that of an uncertificated elementary teacher. District nursing associations, nursing homes, hospitals, local authorities, are not furnished with any guide as to what salaries ought to be paid.

The cost of living has increased by 174 per cent. Medical associations and the National Union of Teachers recognise that they must adjust the salaries of their members to meet this increase. They are doing it patiently and thoroughly. Nursing societies are doing nothing.

Nurses will have to go on being charity-ridden until their societies do their work, and chairmen and secretaries realise that promises made from platforms should be worked out in committee.

I remain,

Yours truly,

C. MARGARET ALDERMAN.

[The economic conditions of nurses are improving, but they are still unsatisfactory, because the nurses themselves do not sufficiently support their organisations financially. Let thousands of nurses come forward and pay at least £1 annual subscription to the Royal British Nurses' Association or other nurses' organisations. Let them loyally support the professional, as opposed to the employers' press, and better conditions would soon be attained. Organisation is now very costly, and until nurses co-operate to pay for it, the work cannot be done. The many thousands of pounds expended on obtaining the Nurses' Registration Acts—opposed by wealthy employers and their subsidised press for thirty years—were contributed by a few hundreds of nurses out of some hundred-thousand. With an income of £10,000, the nurses could better their conditions immensely and wrench themselves free from patronage and pauperisation. Let them come forward and pay for their own freedom, and cease to grumble

because their starved organisations cannot make bricks without straw. THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING will be pleased to receive the names and addresses on a post-card, of nurses willing to pay £1 annually towards co-operative action. Send to B.J.N. Office, 431, Oxford St., London, W.1.—ED.]

HOW ABOUT OUR STATE REGISTERED UNIFORM AND BADGE!

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—Under "Church News" on page 5 of to-day's *Morning Post*, on "Status of Women Workers," the Bishop of Winchester writes, "Under the scheme it is proposed to give certificates of recognition to women (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) in Nursing and Hygiene." We have suffered much and long from untrained competition. Are these women to come along after Cottage Nurses have been dealt with, by way of keeping up the supply? Some months back I met a young woman in nurses' uniform at a friend's house, and asked her where she was trained. "Oh! I am a Deaconess," was the reply, and I find she works with a little Wesleyan Chapel. When is our State Registered Uniform and Badge coming along?

Yours sincerely,

Letchworth.

CLARA LEE.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING REQUIRED.

A Member Bart's League: "As a Scottish woman I read with relief in a recent B.J.N. that the Nursing Council for Scotland has wisely decided not to make provision for a Cottage Nurses' Supplementary Register, as the English Council 'had decided to take no steps.' But, as you point out in your reply to the Chairman of the Irish Nursing Council, as there is nothing in the Irish and Scottish Rules to prevent Cottage Nurses, V.A.D.'s and other practically untrained women being placed on the General Register during the term of grace, may I urge my well-trained Scottish colleagues to have a clear understanding with the Scottish Council on this point? From what I can gather from friends in Scotland, the nurses are so unorganised that they are not sufficiently forceful to impress the Scottish Board of Health and Nursing Council. The discourteous treatment of a communication from the Professional Union of Trained Nurses (Glasgow) by the General Nursing Council in allowing it 'to lie on the table'—in other words, refusing it consideration and reply—shows the autocratic attitude of Captain Balfour's Council towards the nurses *before* registration. One wonders what it will be *afterwards*, and how many nurses will hesitate to register and be governed by it. *Once bitten, twice shy.*"

[We hope members of Scottish Nurses' Societies, including the "College" members, will express their determination that for the future their letters to their General Nursing Council shall not

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)