

## 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.

## CLASS LEGISLATION.

*Mrs. Mary Farmer:* "I quite agree with you that the decision of the Minister of Labour in thrusting under the Unemployment Insurance Act all probationers and nurses who do not earn £250 a year is scandalous, especially as he well knows how strongly we all object to it. But surely as a profession we are terribly to blame that some 60,000 (at the least) professional women have permitted this Act to be passed including them, without taking effective steps through their M.P.'s to prevent it. The Nursing Profession will be taxed of thousands of pounds and never be a penny the better for it, as once more this is an industrial Act, and we are not industrial workers. We are just going to be plucked so that our feathers may make things softer for Labour, which in many instances earns treble our remuneration. Then how about charity money? No wonder it is drying up so far as hospitals are concerned, when its gifts are to be taxed in support of this Act. Instead of taxing the hospitals to pay for unemployment insurance the probationers and nurses will never use, much better insert a clause for hospitals in an insurance scheme. But I set out to blame my own cloth for its apathy and futility in not rising against exploitive taxation; and may I ask them what use they are making of their votes? The Minister of Labour represents Camberwell, S.E., and how are nurses resident in that constituency proposing to bring home to the Right Hon. Thomas J. Macnamara, M.P., LL.D., that they are not to be exploited with impunity? Votes are the only weapon politicians care a straw about. Will Camberwell nurses over 30 enquire if their names are on the register, and, incidentally, let other nurses taxed against their interests do likewise? I am for making a bee-line to oppose every M.P. who votes against justice, and for Ministers who promote class legislation; and this Unemployment Insurance Act appears to me a glaring example of both."

## A MISLEADING TITLE.

*A Servant of the Nurses' Co-operation, 22, Langham Street, W.*—"I was greatly astonished to find that I am not, as I always thought I was, a member of the Nurses' Co-operation, but only a servant of those people who are incorporated as such. Why is it called the Nurses' Co-operation, if the nurses have no power under the constitution to co-operate? Seems a very misleading title, and it is odd that we have been kept in the dark for thirty years, and our true and dependant position never explained in the report until now.

I am not hoping for any reform as after the MacCallum revolt, and the manner in which she and others were treated for wishing to modernise the present regulations, the 'Co-operation' will presumably eject others who are not content to blindly obey its control without question. All the average private nurse cares for, so far as my experience goes, is to be kept in cases who pay good fees. Presumably they find that altruism does not pay."

[Our objection to so-called nurses' companies, even if limited by guarantee, is that they are usually formed by the laity to govern professional women, and are calculated to encourage a very autocratic form of government. But nurses are to blame for weakly and ignorantly placing themselves under such control. When nurses as a class have more public and communal spirit, in striving to help one another, they will themselves benefit. We—a confirmed optimist—hope that this will be the beneficent result of legal status and professional *esprit de corps*—the essence of the Nurses' Registration Acts. But, of course, we must "stand upon our feet" if we would speak with God, and this will never be whilst we grovel after personal advancement and material welfare. Altruism *does* pay a thousandfold, and the treatment which discourages it, and attempts to stamp it out, is cruelly anti-Christian.—ED.]

## REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*To Miss Ada Moss, Manchester.*—We strongly advise you to make up your mind to prepare yourself conscientiously for the care of the sick by entering a good training school for the complete course of three years' training. By the time your course is finished State Registration will be in force, and the time of grace for existing nurses will have expired. Short cuts to practising as a nurse are unfair to the patients and to the Nursing Profession.

*To Sister M. C., London.*—We do not think you would like private nursing after being in charge of a ward so long. If you undertake it you must realise that the public in their own homes will not be nursed with rigidity. Much tact and patience are required.

*To Miss Amy Croft.*—The Guild of Health stands for, and desires to impress on all, the supremacy of the Spiritual life in man, and the impossibility of any complete health, either physical or mental, unless this truth is recognised and acted upon. Information may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 3, Bedford Square, W.C. 1.

## PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

*April 9th.*—What do you consider should be the qualifications for a Health Visitor? Describe a typical day's work of a Health Visitor.

*April 16th.*—What is marasmus? What are the principal nursing points in caring for a case of this kind?

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