

## 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.*

## "PLAYING THE GAME."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—When I read of what happened at the meeting of the General Nursing Council on May 19th my feelings were a compound of indignation and sorrow. I can see nothing in your Resolution to justify the opposition of the majority, because it is a proof that the new Rule passed in February is against the best interests of the Nurses, and that should be the chief concern of the members of the G.N.C. However, honest opposition is one thing, but when it takes the form of covert, and also *direct* personal attack, it is quite another—and very contemptible—thing.

By-laws govern, not only the procedure, but also the personal conduct of the members of the Statutory Council to which I belong, but, as far as I can see, the G.N.C. seems to be without law, or perhaps above it! Personal and private feelings of a self-interested character appear to dominate the proceedings, and apparently the Chairman is content to have it so. What is best for the working nurses—who are watching to see how their interests are guarded—seems to be a matter of very small importance to all but the minority of six. And what about posterity? It seems to me there will be nothing built for them, they will have to begin all over again. Perhaps the world will be more enlightened and less selfish by that time. That Sir Jenner Verrall should so wilfully misconstrue your meaning and say things so untrue and cruel of you is amazing. He knows, as well as a great many others know, that your sole purpose in going on to the Council, after your long years of hard and disinterested work for the Nursing Profession, is to "*play the game*" for the Nurses. I would like to ask him, and those who support him in his "savage attack," a question or two through the medium of this Journal, which always *speaks the truth* :—

(1) Is it "*playing the game*" for grown-up persons, members of a Statutory Council, to behave like petulant children, strike work for many weeks, and by their conduct allow £500 of the Nurses' money to be practically wasted, just because they don't like opposition?

(2) Is it "*playing the game*" to frame a new rule for the most obvious and transparent purpose of removing a fellow-member from a Committee, because she is courageous enough to oppose what is wrong?

Yes, it is not indignation only, but sorrow that I feel over this. This journal goes all over the world; I feel ashamed to think of what our fellow Nurses in other countries will be thinking of us and all this pettiness. I know what our sisters in America think.

I dare not encroach too much upon the limited space of this Journal, but I could say much.

In conclusion, let me thank you—as many others will do—for your fearless and consistent stand for principle.

BEATRICE KENT.

Member of St. Pancras Borough Council.

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

## FACING THE MUSIC.

*Clara Lee, Registered Nurse, Letchworth.*—"Much sympathy for all the trials you continue to face."

[It would be much worse if we did not face them.—ED.]

*Mollie Delane, Dublin.*—"You English nurses must be a poor lot to have a medical man in charge of your Uniform Committee. Doesn't seem quite decent to us Irish Biddies."

[It isn't.—ED.]

## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

*A Matron writes* :—"I have recently read Lord Wellesley's statement on his resigning the Seals during the Perceval Administration in 1812. It appears very apposite to the refusal of members of the Minority on the G.N.C. to serve on the Registration Committee under the new Rules. 'No hope,' wrote Lord Wellesley (the Minority) 'existed of converting Mr. Perceval (the Majority) or any of his colleagues.' No alternative, therefore, remained for Lord Wellesley but to resign, or to be the Instrument of a System, which he never advised, and which he could not approve. Lord Wellesley had repeatedly, with great reluctance, yielded his opinions to the Cabinet on many other important points. He was sincerely convinced by experience that, in every such instance, he had submitted to opinions more incorrect than his own, and had sacrificed to the object of accommodation and temporary harmony more than he could justify in point of strict Public Duty. In fact, he was convinced by experience that the Cabinet neither possessed ability nor knowledge to devise a good plan; nor temper and discernment to *adopt* what he now thought necessary unless Mr. Perceval should concur with Lord Wellesley. To Mr. Perceval's judgment, or attainments, Lord Wellesley (under the same experience) could not pay any deference without injury to the Public Service."

[No person with a sense of personal and professional responsibility, or "Public Duty," could accept office under Rule 9 A.—ED.]

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

*June 17th.*—Mention some of the more common skin affections, their causes, and the treatment you have seen applied.

*June 24th.*—How would you feed a nervous patient whose diet is left to your discretion? Give a model dietary for a day.

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