

## 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 NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I be allowed to supplement the account of the "National Union of Trained Nurses" given in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING of December 10th?

The Society was started in Somerset roughly about 20 years ago as "The Nurses' Social Union," by Miss Eden, Miss Joseph and Miss Platt. It was originally intended to help isolated nurses in country villages by providing them with educational facilities and opportunities of meeting one another in friendly intercourse.

The county was mapped out into areas with a Branch of the Union in each, and periodical meetings were held which were greatly appreciated by the members. Nurses belonging to different branches of the profession were brought into touch and a real spirit of comradeship grew up.

Before the National Insurance Scheme with its campaign against Tuberculosis was begun the Branches of the Nurses' Social Union had their open-air Shelters, which were lent to patients needing them, some of which are still used by the Local Authority.

They were also pioneers in Travelling Exhibitions, Picture Postcards, Health Lectures, &c., and the fame of their exhibits reached far beyond the county. They were shown most successfully in London, Dublin, Bristol, Gloucester, &c., while for several years the Union supported a Lecturer who rendered valuable educational services throughout the county.

The Society in Somerset proved so successful that other counties wanted to copy it, and it was felt that there should be some Central Body to which counties could affiliate. About twelve years ago therefore a Central Committee was formed in London and an office started there. This led to a rapid change in the character of the Union which altered its name to "The National Union of Trained Nurses," and gradually restricted its membership to fully trained women.

As is shown in Miss Nicholls' article, it still does very valuable work and is a source of inspiration and help to large numbers of the Nursing Profession, but there are many lonely women working often singlehanded as District Nurses in country villages or in small workhouses who miss the opportunities of keeping abreast with nursing developments, theoretical and practical, and the kindly human intercourse provided by the friendly gatherings of the old "Nurses' Social Union."

I am, yours faithfully,

AN ORIGINAL MEMBER.

[We well remember the very valuable work done by the Nurses' Social Union in former years, to which "An Original Member" refers. Now that State Registration has been won—which cost so much time and money—and the Nursing Profession has been put on a legal basis, social work should more and more occupy the time of the nurses' organisations, and no organisation has the threads of such work in hand equally with the pioneer N.U.T.N. The College of Nursing, Ltd., engineered by hospital officials, came along and, unhappily, absorbed many of the most useful local branches of the N.U.T.N., but having done so, has entirely failed to carry on the useful educative social work done by them. Would it not be possible for the N.U.T.N. to revive its former activities?—ED.]

### KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A. E. M. (Sister).—"I quite agree that no mental nursing Sister should attend a General Nursing Sister's case, and *vice versa*. I stick exclusively to my own special branch. . . . Mental nursing is coming into its own now, if only the nurses rise to the occasion and realise their opportunities. As in the other branches of our profession, 'tis only the few who take a deep interest in the affairs of their craft. I often din into the ears of those who will listen how narrow the personal spirit is."

[Many of our readers have enjoyed the high-toned articles from the pen of this correspondent in the B.J.N. We hope she will continue to urge well-trained Mental Nurses to support the State Register of Mental Nurses, and thus enjoy a professional status in the future which has been denied to us all in the past. Mental Nurses who hold the certificate of the Medico-Psychological Association or its equivalent are eligible for registration, and should build up a strong electorate through which to elect representatives on to the General Nursing Council when the opportunity is afforded to them some time this year.—ED.]

### WHERE TO REGISTER.

Nurses who wish to be included in the First State Register should not delay to send in their Application Forms.

*In England and Wales.*—Apply to the Registrar, G.N.C., 12, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

*In Scotland.*—Apply to the Registrar, 13, Melville Street, Edinburgh.

*In Ireland.*—Apply to the Registrar, 33, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

*January 21st.*—What do you understand by hyperpyrexia? State in full the different methods which might be adopted to control it.

*January 28th.*—What varieties of immunity have you heard of? In what ways can an individual be protected against an infectious disease?

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