

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.

A PHANTOM COLLEGE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Mr. Comyns Berkeley, one of the Hon. Treasurers of the College of Nursing, Ltd., is apparently hearing some home truths when endeavouring to shepherd nurses into the College fold, which is whenever he meets a trained nurse for the first time, for he stated in an address to the College Centre at Sheffield he always says to her, "Do you belong to the College of Nursing?" I wonder what Mr. Berkeley would reply if, whenever a trained nurse met him she asked him, "Do you belong to the British Medical Association?" He would probably, if he did not consider that she should be humoured as mentally unsound, suggest that she should mind her own business.

Mr. Berkeley stated in his address that he receives the following answers to his question (1) No, I have never heard of the College, (2) No, what's the use? What good should I get out of it? (3) Not likely; it's a regular swindle. (4) No, I cannot make up my mind, because I have heard the College is not doing all it said it would. (5) Yes, and I am proud of it. (Apparently the noes have it.)

Mr. Berkeley further told the Sheffield Centre that just as patients would be wise, if they knew, not to seek the advice of doctors who do not read medical journals and have no knowledge of modern methods of treatment, "so doctors would be wise in not employing a nurse who fails to take the slightest interest in her profession beyond the fact that it is a means of earning a livelihood and is, necessarily, therefore one who has never heard of the College of Nursing."

That appears to me to be more than unwarrantable interference with a nurse's business. It is a direct threat on the part of a College official that unless a nurse falls down and worships the golden image (in the shape of the College of Nursing, Ltd.) the medical profession will boycott her, and so prevent her making a living.

Incidentally it should be noted that doctors do not employ nurses. Whoever pays their salaries or fees does that. But doctors do act very often as unofficial intermediaries between nurses and the public, and it would be indefensible in the highest degree for a doctor to boycott a nurse because she was not a subscriber to any particular organisation or association of nurses. He should be influenced in selecting a nurse for a case not by her nursing politics, but by her professional capacity.

Further, I must own to some sympathy with the nurse who has never heard of the College. We have all heard of the College Company *ad nauseam*, but perhaps Mr. Berkeley will inform the nursing profession where the College of Nursing is, who is its Principal, and who form the Faculty. There

are many nurses who, with me, would like to know. Personally, "I don't believe there ever was no such a person."

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A SHEFFIELD NURSE.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"PRIMED UP WITH MAJESTIC PRIDE."

The reception of the first batch of State Certificates by "Registered Nurses" has evidently—to judge by our post bag—aroused delight and enthusiasm, especially amongst the pioneer registrationists. Just to show their tone we publish "Kernels" from two, as samples of others. Hope deferred has evidently not in these cases "made the heart sick."

M. B., The College, Northfleet.—"What can I say to you? Oh! the joy I felt when I received my State Certificate, by second post on Saturday. Tears of delight for some minutes, then I put on my best hat, &c., and went to tell my two dearest friends in the College. How I longed to see you and give you a good hug, for I know but for you and your supporters we might have waited till 'the crack of doom.' Please accept my dearest and most thankful, grateful thanks. It is the coping stone of my long nursing life—I only feared I should have 'passed over' before the glad news reached me. Of course, I am going to-day to have a frame made for my Certificate, and hang it where it will remind me that at last I have legal status and am a "Registered Nurse."

E. W. 552 to the Assistant Editor.—"My certificate of Registration came by Registered Post this evening. It is very chaste and beautiful to look upon and greatly admired in this house. Just for one moment one felt 'primed up with majestic pride' to possess it. Then flooded in memories—such memories of long years of work and sacrifice. I think of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and am real proud to have her signature on the precious document; of Miss Isla Stewart; of you (Miss M. Brey). This thing would never have come in my lifetime if it had not been for the wonderful courage and strength and genius of you three. It makes one very humble and very thoughtful and very grateful. Never will I lose an opportunity of teaching the present-day nurses what this thing has meant to those who had the vision. Thoughts and memories just overwhelm me to-night."

NOTICE.

The Editor asks correspondents to note that letters on matters of business should be addressed to the Manager, BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., and not to the private Editorial address at 20, Upper Wimpole St., London, W.1, where they cannot be dealt with.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION.

February 4th.—What are the most common superficial injuries to the eye, and what is the usual treatment which a nurse may be required to apply in the various cases?

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