

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 EMPIRE AND THE MENTAL INVALIDS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—May I very heartily endorse the splendid sentiments expressed in your leading article this week; not only regarding the treatment of ex-service men, who are mental invalids, and whose plea for special consideration surely cannot be refuted—but also regarding the words "lunatic" and "lunatic asylum." It is years now since these names were *officially* consigned to the limbo of the past, but the average citizen, who knows far too little about mental hospitals *from the inside*, will persist in using them. The public would not be alarmed by so-called "revelations," if they would glean their information at first hand!

Your definition of the words used is the best I have seen or heard: "An 'asylum' is a place where patients are housed under care; whereas a 'hospital' indicates remedial treatment."

I am, Dear Editor,
Yours sincerely,
A. E. MACDONALD (Sister).

194, Queen's Gate,
London, S.W. 7.

A NATIONAL DUTY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—As a member of the British Legion (Chelsea and Kensington Branch) I should like to thank you, on behalf of ex-Service men and women, for the vigorous editorial on "Ex-Service Men as Pauper Lunatics," in this week's B.J.N. I have drawn the attention of Conservative speakers to it who are also fighting this intolerable decision of the Government, and I am endeavouring to get a wider public for your article among nurses themselves.

May I remind your readers that since the Whit-sun Conference women are eligible for full membership of the British Legion "on the same terms as men." This includes all members of the naval, military, and Air Force Nursing Services, and members of V.A. Detachments, also "(women) of the Red Cross organisation of the Empire, provided they have served with the Forces of the Crown," and "any British or naturalised British subjects who served seven days in an Allied Force during the Great War."

One of the immediate objects of the Legion, as declared by the Constitution, is (b) to educate public opinion that the maintenance of the disabled and the welfare of ex-service men is a national duty.

To stigmatize a man as a pauper who, in spite of mental instability, *was accepted as fit to fight for his country*, because, instead of losing his life in her service he has lost his *reason*; and then

to excuse it on the grounds that his present mental ill-health is "non-attributable to his service with the Forces," is, to my mind, and that of all decent men and women, an intolerable breaking of faith with the dead whom the country will honour on November 11th.

Many nurses and V.A.D. members now have votes. Let them join the Legion and strengthen its hands when it demands from the new Government fulfilment of the country's pledges to the men (and women) who served.

Colonel Heath, D.S.O., the General Secretary of the British Legion, at the headquarters at 26, Eccleston Square, S.W.1, will give enquirers information as to the nearest local branch which they can join. The Legion can do much to help ex-Service nurses, and nurses can do much to help ex-Service men.

Yours faithfully,

V. C. C. COLLUM,
(Former Radiographer, Hôp. Aux.
d'Armée 30, Scottish Women's
Hospitals, France.)

4, Milton Chambers,
128, Cheyne Walk, S.W.10.

We hope to deal with a somewhat lengthy letter from Miss Sayle, Chairman of the Women Sanitary Inspectors' and Health Visitors' Association, in an early issue.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Miss M. C., Woodstock, U.S.A.—The *New Generation* is a monthly periodical, price 6d., published by the "New Generation League," 124, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. The *Birth Control News* is also a monthly paper, price 1d. (by post for Americans, 50 cents), published by the proprietors of the Mothers' Clinic, 61, Marlborough Road, London, N.19.

WHERE TO REGISTER.

Apply for Application Form to the Registrar:—

ENGLAND AND WALES—12, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

SCOTLAND—13, Melville Street, Edinburgh.

IRELAND—33, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

Forms should be carefully filled in and the names given for references from persons who have agreed to supply them.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

November 4th.—Describe the preparation of a patient for receiving an anæsthetic. What precautions would you take before and after?

November 11th.—Explain the preparation and materials necessary for the application of a plaster cast. Describe the process of applying a body cast, and the points to which the nurse who assists the surgeon should pay special attention.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)