

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 BREACH OF CONTRACT SHOULD BE CONTESTED IN A COURT OF LAW.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—As one deeply interested in nursing questions, may I state with reference to your comments on the meeting held by the London Centre of the College of Nursing, to discuss the Rules of admission of existing nurses to the State Register, the Resolution before the meeting was forwarded to all the 32 Centres of the College of Nursing, and the considered opinion of all the members invited. I am informed the replies now being received are in agreement with the Resolution.

The object of the London Centre in bringing up the matter for discussion, far from being to protect the exceptional woman, whose distinguished career requires no protection from the State, was to see that the Act of 1919, granting registration to the nurses of the country, was justly interpreted, and the bona fide practising nurses protected. Surely it is the privilege of all fully-qualified women to see that justice is done to those bona fide practising nurses, who, through no fault of their own, are not now considered eligible for registration. Since the Act of 1919 demands the protection of the bona fide practising nurse, the first State Register does not, and should not, set the standard of qualification for registration, this standard will be set later by the Syllabus of training and the one Portal Examination.

Yours faithfully,

Exhall, Coventry. DORIS M. CREASY.

[The Nurses' Registration Act was not, in the first instance, passed to protect unqualified nurses, but to protect the public from inefficient nurses, if they choose to avail themselves of the services of women who have undergone the "prescribed training" and possess the "prescribed experience in the nursing of the sick," or who have been admitted to the Register under conditions which appear to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales to be "satisfactory for the purposes of this provision," as the Council has to satisfy itself that they have "adequate knowledge and experience of the nursing of the sick."

The present General Nursing Council decided that a year's training in a General Hospital or Poor Law Infirmary, and subsequently two years' experience, with no limitation as to beds, is the very lowest standard of practical efficiency which it could recommend as providing for safe attendance on the sick.

Also, taking into consideration the fact that during the thirty years that the passing of a Nurses' Registration Act was obstructed by the

Nursing Schools, these schools had compelled thousands of women to train for three years before certification, no doubt the General Nursing Council, in adopting the one year's term of training in addition to two years' practical experience, was actuated by a sense of justice to the thousands of highly qualified women who had given three years' service at infinitesimal pay, to qualify themselves as safe attendants on the sick.

The campaign of the College of Nursing, Ltd., to depreciate the State Register of Nurses is only one more evidence of the danger to nursing standards of this Company, the whole executive power of which is in the hands of the laity, the medical profession, and one unregistered nurse.

If through social influence this minimum requirement for registration on the State Register is annulled, and a gross breach of contract made possible, then, our opinion is, that every nurse who has paid a guinea to be admitted to the Register on this slight protection, has a right of appeal to a Court of Law and, failing to obtain justice, to have her guinea returned, and to demand that her name shall be removed from a list containing the names of totally unqualified persons.

The intense jealousy, and apprehension of financial injury to the College Company, can be well understood. Intelligent nurses will not continue to register with a Limited Liability Company when Parliament has granted to the Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland the great privilege of registration by the Statutory Bodies set up under the Nurses' Registration Acts, namely, the General Nursing Councils for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland.—ED.]

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It may be interesting to your readers to note that the College nominees who were elected on the Scottish Council polled altogether 9,898 votes, and the Independents, 3,947 votes. As these figures are in the proportion of 13 to 5, the College nominees should have had 6 or 7 seats, and the Independents 2 or 3. But the adoption of the *bloc* system, *i.e.*, the voter being able to put a cross to as many candidates' names as there are seats to be filled, has resulted in the majority getting all the seats, and the minority having no representation whatever.

Such a result would have been impossible under a system of Proportional Representation; and—as we pride ourselves in these days in being "sporting"—we may hope that nurses will show their sportsmanship, their love of fair-play, by seeing to it that, before the time for the next election comes round, a juster method of voting be adopted. If not, we shall continue to find the minority unrepresented, even—in the English case—to the extent of keeping off the Council the most persistent and earnest worker in the interest of nurses that this generation has seen, the editor

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