

of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. Let us hope that we shall, at least, be spared this indelible disgrace!

Yours faithfully,

17, Seagry Road, GEORGE F. WATES.
Wanstead, E. 11.

CHAOTIC MUDDLE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—If the matter were not so serious, I should liken the doings of the General Nursing Council (always excluding six members), to a comic opera by Gilbert and Sullivan. The lack of knowledge, and of a sense of responsibility to the nurses they are supposed to represent is amazing in the extreme. The office appears to be a place of prodigal waste of the nurses' money and very inefficient work. As things are at the present time, I consider that we should have been better off without the Act. I received my voting paper late and, like many others, was astonished to find that the *Ballot was not secret*, owing to the identification number; I carefully enquired about this, and then heard of the chaotic muddle which has made it necessary to cancel the election. I am glad to hear that questions have been asked in Parliament, and shall look forward to hearing the replies. Parliament has passed the Act and should, therefore, see that it is properly administered. I am ashamed to think of what our Colonies and other countries, where Registration Acts are in force, will think of the whole disgraceful business.

13, Colosseum Terrace, BEATRICE KENT.
Regent's Park.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A Bristol Nurse.—“Miss Cowlin, from the College of Nursing, has been speaking in support of the College candidates in Bristol. I noted she carefully refrained from giving any credit for the passing of the Registration Acts to the Central Committee which for years agitated for this reform, and whose Bill was the one which would have passed into law in 1919 but for the jealousy of the College, which blocked it in the House—a most discreditable policy. Neither did Miss Cowlin say a word of the inefficient record of the College candidates on the Council standing for election. We heard nothing of Miss Lloyd-Still not standing firm for the Syllabus of general training, to which we nurses have a right. Nothing of Miss Cox-Davies proposing to sweep away the record of our hard-won Certificates on the State Register, and thus degrade us to unqualified women. Nothing of the cowardly, secret attack upon Mrs. Fenwick at the Ministry of Health, and the ten weeks' strike. Nothing of Miss Coulton's mean resolution, designed to remove colleagues from office, which resulted in handing over our Committees to medical and lay Chairmen and consequent muddle. Nothing of the expenditure of close on £10,000 of our money and no Register, no uniform, no badge, no titular letters after our names. Nothing of the inefficient system set up by the College candidate, thrust upon us as Registrar, in our office. To hear Miss Cowlin

you would have thought that the women who have backed up all these abuses, voting solid against every protest and suggestion for reform by the minority on the Council—and, with one exception, every one of whom has been boycotted by the College Committee on its list—were prodigies of organisation and erudition. It would be interesting to know who is paying the expenses of Miss MacGregor and Miss Cowlin touring the country in support of the College candidates. Presumably they are being met out of the income received from the invested £40,000 of money collected in our name—the Nations' Nurses'—and handed over to the College Company by the Chairman of the Fund, who holds the dual office of Chairman of both Societies! By such means is professional liberty suppressed.”

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are receiving a large number of bitter complaints from Registered Nurses—

(1) Because nurses who have paid a guinea for Registration in 1922 are being required to pay the retention fee of 2s. 6d., although the Register has never been published. As the Register was to have been published as soon after July 1st, 1922, as possible, and has so far not appeared, we have much sympathy with our correspondents, especially as the Scottish Council has not claimed the retention fee this year as the Register is not available.

Moreover, correspondents complain that they receive no receipt for weeks, if ever, for these half-crowns, and others that demands are constantly being made for this fee, which has already been paid.

(2) Because of the mismanagement of the Election of nurse representatives and wanting to know who is going to pay the hundreds of pounds it must have cost.

In reply, we place on record that there is little hope of improvement so long as the few nurse organisers on the Council are excluded from organising their own office—which is now conducted under medical direction—and the ignorant interference of a laywoman who knows nothing of clerical or nursing organisation.

We would add that we largely owe this discreditable condition of management to Miss Cox-Davies, Miss Coulton, and other College colleagues, who agreed during the strike to remove experts from the Standing Committees, and proposed medical and lay chairmen both to the Registration Committee—responsible in the first instance for the Election fiasco—and to the General Purposes Committee—responsible for office inefficiency. We place no blame on the present clerical staff. If organised on an up-to-date business system (as it should have been from the first), we have no doubt the officials would be able to do the work satisfactorily, as they are evidently anxious to do, but they have not had a chance, under existing arrangements, to make good.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

December 23rd.—Describe some common disorders of the nervous system and their nursing care.

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