

## 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 TIP FOR THE G.N.C.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It is announced in the press that Mrs. Wilton Phipps has been elected the first Chairman of the London County Council Education Committee, and Lady Eve the Chairman of the Parks' Committee. The recognition of the fitness of these ladies for public service is exceedingly gratifying, and I have no doubt "London" will greatly benefit.

How different must be the liberal spirit animating the L.C.C. from the jealous and reactionary demand of the medical and lay groups on the General Nursing Council—to grasp power to control the Nursing Profession on its own governing body!

But we must not blame the medical group alone. Had not the College Matrons—led by Miss Cox-Davies—sold our birthright for a mess of pottage (their own place and power) this professional degradation could not have been effected.

It was Miss Cox-Davies who proposed to place Dr. Goodall in the Registration Chair, and the Hon. Mrs. Hills in charge of the Committee which selects and controls our clerical personnel, and advises expenditure, to supersede Registered Nurses. In so doing she helped to deprive us of our rightful status on the Council.

Nothing could have been more disastrous to our best interests. The former appointment made possible the passing of Rule 9 (A), giving preferential treatment to College members, and thus doing away with the one portal to the General Part of the Register—a just principle for which we worked for so long.

Moreover it is probable that this scandalous betrayal of our status will open the door to a horde of women being placed on our Register who have never spent a day in a hospital in their lives—a breach of faith with those of us who have paid for registration under the one year's minimum training in existing statutory rules—to say nothing of being empowered to practise as Registered Nurses upon a Certificate signed by medical members of the Council alone. Medical practitioners have no right to control the Nursing Profession outside the Council, but Miss Cox-Davies' policy practically empowers them to do so from within our governing body. And who is Dr. Goodall that he should be given this power over General Nurses? He is himself a salaried official of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, as a Medical Superintendent of a Fever Hospital, has had little to do with the Nursing Profession generally, and I for one strongly object to be governed by this medical and lay combine; through professional jealousy and

ignorance, and at the dictation of the College of Nursing, Ltd., they are attempting to ruin our Register.

The Nursing Acts will never be effective until the principle is enforced that the Chairs of the Council and the Standing Committees are filled by Registered Nurses; until that time we are mere serfs and we have largely to thank Miss Cox-Davies for placing us under the heel of unprofessional persons.

I commend the policy of the London County Council to the G.N.C. and the Ministry of Health.

Yours faithfully,

MEMBER BART.'S LEAGUE.

## FATAL APATHY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—As far as one can judge from letters in the nursing papers, nurses seem to be taking extraordinarily little interest in the doings of the General Nursing Council; e.g., at the last Council meeting three very important points were raised and decided on: (1) That general trained nurses should not have "prescribed training"; (2) that "Bonafides" should be admitted to the Roll who were working before 1900. These *bona fides* need have had no hospital experience at all, though before that date a three years' certificate was considered necessary for the Services, and for the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute a one year's certificate was at that time compulsory; (3) the Finance and Registration Committees have medical members of the Council as Chairmen, though apparently nurses were proposed for both Chairs by nurses.

Yours faithfully,

RETIRED NURSE.

[The fatal apathy of nurses is well known to their employers. In connection with the policy of the G.N.C. hundreds of nurses are so sick of its jealousies and jobs they prefer not to have anything to do with it under present management. Of course, this policy is fatal to their professional interests. They should rouse themselves and insist on self-government.—ED.]

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

DIGNITY IS CENTRED IN DUTY.

*Esther C. Stuart.*—"The trained nurses of to-day are sadly ignorant, and have been purposely kept so. Never a word in my training school of Nursing history, or explanation of professional ethics or registration. The false premises of Sir Wilmot Herringham, the Chairman of the G.N.C., in comparing the Medical and Nursing Councils, is inexcusable if he has ever read the Nurses' Act (he owned publicly a few weeks ago he had not read the Scottish Act), but the majority of the G.N.C. no doubt swallowed his statements without question. Talk about Gilbert and Sullivan operas! the illogical and illegal conclusions of the G.N.C. beats the lot. Fancy the four Supplementary parts of the Register having a statutory curriculum, as granted by Parliament, and the General Nurses, who, after all, form the backbone of the Nursing:

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