

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.

NEW RULE ENCOURAGES EXPLOITATION OF THE SICK IN NURSING HOMES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—My indignation has been seriously aroused by reading Dr. Salter's statement in the House of Commons on June 13th, as to the standard (or lack of standard) of nursing in private nursing homes throughout the country.

Had he taken the trouble to find out before making the assertion that almost all the members of the nursing staffs therein employed do not, and cannot, fulfil the requirements of the Rule for Registration of the General Nursing Council—which requires a minimum of one year's training—he would have found at least thirty in the vicinity of Harley Street kept by fully-trained nurses, who only employ fully-trained nurses, and the minority of others who keep nursing homes and who do not possess a certificate, employ fully-trained women to nurse the patients.

The plight of these homes will be disastrous in future in regard to obtaining a sufficient number of certificated nurses—as I feel certain few of the educated class will take up this branch of work, if called upon to work on terms of professional equality with women who have not taken the trouble to train, and yet who *dare* to assume the responsibility of caring for the sick.

Yours truly,

E. EDITH FOWLER, S.R.N.

[We feel sure many certificated nurses who admirably conduct private nursing homes will share Miss Fowler's indignation. Dr. Salter's statement that the majority of nursing homes (charging high fees for skilled nursing as they do) are staffed by untrained persons is a serious indictment of his medical colleagues who send their patients to such institutions. Such nursing homes need drastic supervision, and to be compelled to employ well trained Nurses, before they are permitted to admit the sick for treatment and operation. Medical practitioners will not recognise unregistered colleagues in practice—they should now take steps to protect their patients from unregistered nurses. That it should have been the medical M.P.'s who agreed to degrade our Register by giving the professional privileges, *we have earned*, to women who have not done so—proves the need for more loyalty from doctors to nurses.—Ed.]

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE GREAT BETRAYAL."

"*Want My Guinea Back*" writes: "So upset was I when I read in last Thursday morning's paper that Dr. Chapple and his medical colleagues

(who must know how unjust his motion is) had succeeded, supported by the Labour Party, in ruining the General Part of the Register, that I got a copy of the Official Report of the Debates. The ignorance, as there portrayed, of our legislators is evidently colossal, and the assumption that nurses are trained and disciplined by medical men is gaily accepted. Never was a greater fallacy. Are we enfranchised citizens, with professional status, or are we merely chattels? According to Sir George Buchanan in his 'Memoirs,' Queen Victoria recorded on the margin of a despatch that the treatment of England by Bismarck 'made her blood boil.' Well, mine boiled over when I read the debate in the Commons of the treatment of registered nurses by medical men. May I ask why Scottish M.P.s take the initiative in ruining the standard of the English Register and leave the Scottish Register severely alone? Are there no Gamps on the other side of the Border, whose wrongs wring the hearts of Scottish M.P.s, or does their emotional twaddle not appeal to the Right Hon. Viscount Novar, Secretary for Scotland—who has studied the Nurses' Registration question for many years past? Then I note Lieut.-Col. Fremantle describes the present General Nursing Council as a 'democratic' body. Why democratic—when it has nine unprofessional persons on it? Has a medical chairman and medical bosses in power on the Registration, Finance and Mental Committees? What would Col. Fremantle say if Parliament placed nine lay persons and registered nurses on to the General Medical Council—and a Registered Nurse occupied the chair? Democratic, indeed! The Council is dragged by the most uncouth man in the medical profession—placed there on purpose to bully us into submission. Our Council Chamber is known as the 'Star Chamber,' and our Headquarters as 'Traitor's Gate.' Nepotism reigns supreme—and the latest outrage is to make us pay a young clerk in the twenties—a protégée of another medical autocrat—a salary and travelling allowances which will cost us £700 a year—to arrange our professional examinations!—of the very terms of which she must be totally ignorant. Moreover, this professional position was eagerly sought by some of our most highly trained nurses. Highly paid posts apparently spring up like mushrooms whenever an old personal friend of the Registrar is out of a job. When is the Prime Minister going to appoint a Select Committee to enquire into all these abuses? No wonder, as the Medical Superintendent of Guy's Hospital, and the Chairman of the London Hospital testify, the maintenance and supply of nurses is one of the most acute hospital problems, and that the present supply of probationers is most precarious, and few hospitals have their full nursing staffs. If our profession is to be governed by cave men—there will soon be no probationers at all."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

July 14th.—Describe (a) the symptoms, (b) the nursing management, of a case of concussion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)