

## 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 RECOGNITION OF MENTAL NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MY DEAR EDITOR,—I am always touched and gratified by, and never fail to note, the graceful and delicate compliments you so often pay to mental nurses in our Journal. Again, last week, in describing how the two nurses managed the poor demented ex-Soldier at Aldershot Hospital, you say: "The courage of the nurses in dealing with the patient was commented upon," adding, "we are sure they did their duty faithfully and well. Here follows the kernel of the compliment: "So do many nurses, of whom the public hears nothing, who, while the world sleeps, keep watch over delirious and insane patients."

If the public only knew how much is committed to the charge of the nurses in our vast mental hospitals and elsewhere, and how heroically they fulfil that trust, risking their lives often to save their poor patients from harm, themselves surrounded day and night by a latent element of danger, they would not only accord that noble and self-denying work some meed of praise, but take a little more interest in the system (and a wonderful system it is!) which produces these heroic souls. A nurse seeks no praise, nor is she perturbed by blame, but with splendid courage "carries on."

May the day soon dawn now when her work will be better known and understood by the public who owe her so much!

I am, dear Editor,  
Yours faithfully,

A. E. MACDONALD.  
(Sister).

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

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

TREATING THE NURSES' ACT WITH CONTEMPT.

*Registered Nurse, Birmingham.*—"I read the report of the last Council Meeting of the G.N.C. with some astonishment, as I have in my possession a copy of a leaflet issued in thousands by the G.N.C. last year, giving eleven reasons why nurses should register. (9) runs as follows: 'In December of this year (1922), a new General Nursing Council will be formed and sixteen of its members will be elected by registered nurses. *But only those nurses whose names are on the State Register by October 1st, 1922, will be able to vote for candidates in this election.* The General Nursing Council is the body which sets the standard of training and controls the professional education of nurses. It is, therefore, highly advisable that there should be a large number of nurses to take part in the election of the Council.' May I enquire why: (1) Hundreds of nurses, members of the College

of Nursing Ltd., who were registered on November 17th, have been included in the voting list and have had ballot papers sent to them? (2) Why the Chairman of the G.N.C. publicly repudiated the Syllabus of general training, and control of professional education of nurses, as he did to the deputation of delegates of the Association of Poor Law Unions on October 6th? Apparently this Statutory Body is permitted by the Ministry of Health to play fast and loose with our professional affairs."

[As a member of the late General Nursing Council for England and Wales, we are of opinion that the conduct of business by the majority has been totally illegal on numerous occasions, and the rights of the nurses granted by Act of Parliament treated with contempt. The most glaring instance of illegal conduct was the disfranchising of 802 nurses, whose applications had been received by September 30th, 1922, by refusing to register them on December 15th, *although their papers were in order*, and thus purposely denying them the right to vote for their representatives on the new General Nursing Council. As to the expression of opinion by the Chairman of the Council to the Poor Law Deputation that the "prescribed scheme" of education, demanded by Act of Parliament and drafted by the Council was only a model for guidance of training schools—in fact, a mere "scrap of paper"—it was, no doubt, made in ignorance of the provisions of the Act. It was no less erroneous for that, and we are glad to know that no matter who forms the next General Nursing Council, Registered Nurses are going to demand that the Act shall be conformed to, for General as well as Special nurses.—ED.]

## NOTICE.

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## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

*January 27th.*—Give an account of the diet and treatment in a case of scarlatinal nephritis.

*February 3rd.*—What points would you emphasise in giving pre-natal instruction, and what special matters would you attend to in giving post-natal care?

*February 10th.*—What do you know of the after-care and treatment of infantile paralysis?

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