

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 ROYAL NORTHERN HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It is with the most sincere regret that we have to announce that the £20,000, which the Board of Management of the Royal Northern Hospital needed by the 31st. July to prevent the closing of wards in the four Institutions under their control, has not been obtained. Consequently, the Board have had no alternative but to close 70 beds.

Although the appeal was widespread, only £1,500 has been received towards this fund. The Board are confident that this result is not indicative of lack of public sympathy, but is due to the fact that the majority of people do not realise the gravity of the situation, and do not translate a Hospital's debt into terms of suffering humanity.

The closing of 70 beds in the Royal Northern Group means that over a period of a year another thousand cases will have to be refused admission for treatment, and it must be borne in mind that, owing to the closed wards and to the long waiting lists of other General Hospitals, most of these cases will be unable to obtain the necessary medical and surgical attention anywhere.

We earnestly hope that even now the public may be stirred to realise the great hardship that this lack of support has placed upon the necessitous sick of North London, and that funds will be forthcoming speedily so as to shorten this misery as much as possible.

Yours obediently,

NORTHAMPTON, Chairman.

H. J. TENNANT, Deputy Chairman.

PHILIP SASSOON, Hon. Treasurer.

G. B. MOWER WHITE,

Emeritus Surgeon.

44, Bryanston Square, W.1.

SOMEBODY'S BUSINESS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I was much interested in your leading article last week upon social service, and I would like, with your permission, to draw attention to a direction in which social service might be usefully developed. I refer to the patients in hospital wards.

We all know how much mental anxiety affects a patient's physical condition. Now many, perhaps most, of our patients come into hospital unexpectedly—suddenly disabled by a street accident, or removed from home when acutely ill by the urgent advice of the doctor.

While we do everything in our power to remedy the physical disability, in how many hospitals is any systematic attempt made to relieve the mental condition? I have known a temperature which

was worrying the surgeon in charge of a case come down speedily to normal when a comprehending Sister sensed the mental anxiety due to home worries, and took steps to relieve them; but there must be many similar cases where a patient has on his mind worries which go unsuspected and unrelieved. It is somebody's business to see that our patients should not have unnecessary mental anxiety, but whose?

I suggest that, from the humanitarian as well as from the clinical point of view, it is desirable that every large hospital should have a nurse allotted to social service duty, whose business it should be to visit each new patient and invite him to say whether there is anything he wishes straightened out, owing to his unexpected admission to hospital, and if so to offer her services in this connection.

It is obvious that this particular bit of work cannot be undertaken by the members of the nursing staff of a busy ward, but is it not a mistake to assume that none of our patients have any troubles which are retarding their recovery?

We may not all put it as crudely as that, but practically we ignore and to a certain extent we must ignore everything but the broken or suffering body with which it is our primary duty to deal. I should welcome the work of a colleague, a recognised member of the hospital staff, to act as a sort of liaison officer between the patients and their homes.

I am, Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,

STATE REGISTERED NURSE.

REGISTRATION OF INTERMEDIATE NURSES.

The only Nurses who are now eligible for registration are what are termed Intermediate Nurses—those who have completed their three years' training and been awarded a Certificate since November 1st, 1919. The term of two years' grace for Existing Nurses has terminated.

WHERE TO REGISTER.

Apply for Application Form to the Registrar:—
ENGLAND AND WALES—12, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

SCOTLAND—13, Melville Street, Edinburgh.

IRISH FREE STATE—33, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

NORTHERN IRELAND—118, Great Victoria Street, Belfast.

Forms should be carefully filled in and the names given for references from persons who have agreed to supply them.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

August 25th.—What signs and symptoms would you expect in a case of gastric ulcer? Describe the nursing in such a case.

September 1st.—Describe the daily care which should be given to the feet to keep them in good condition, and the principal indications for consulting (1) a chiropodist, (2) a medical practitioner.

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