

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.

YOUTH v. EFFICIENCY AND EXPERIENCE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May we, through the medium of your Journal, give a little publicity to, and also ask your opinion of, the following?

A member of the nursing profession returned from the East last spring, having just finished eight years of service, at home and abroad, as a Sister in Q.A.I.N.S. She found the task of getting a new post a very difficult matter and applied to the College of Nursing (of which she is a member). For some considerable time no notice was taken of her application. As it was getting a serious matter for her to get settled, she called personally at the office, and complained of their inability to help her, at the same time telling them that the only substantial help she had received since her return to England had been from the Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association, an Association to which she did not then belong. To her great astonishment she was asked by the official she interviewed if it had not occurred to her to accept the fact that she was too old for nursing. Her actual age is 45. She is thoroughly active in mind and body, health perfect. She possesses a charming disposition and has every quality of a good nurse. She holds the Certificate of one of the large London Hospitals, the C.M.B., and is a M.C.S.M.M.G.

There is too great a tendency to regard nurses as "too old at forty," and if the headquarters of a large body of nurses is accepting and propagating such an idea, it is only adding very greatly to the economic difficulties of the profession and its members. However, College nurses have put the V.A.D. Chairman in their chair, and it is perhaps natural that youth is regarded by the headquarters of the College as taking precedence of efficiency and experience. Their point of view actually leaves a trained nurse some 17 years (after taking her general and special training) to earn her livelihood and to provide for independence during the 25 years or so which she has to lie on the shelf.

We beg to remain,

Your obedient servants,
R. SILCOCK.
G. BEVAN.

39, Dupont Road,
Wimbledon.

[We open our columns to free discussion on this letter. Our experience is that, if health is good, trained nurses do excellent work up to 50 years of age. After that time they need more rest; but we know quite a number of hospital Sisters nearing 60 who are doing valuable work supervising and instructing the younger generation.—ED.]

A FEELING OF HOMELINESS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—If space permits, will you kindly allow me to send a few lines to the B.J.N.?

I have just returned to St. Leonards-on-Sea after having spent a very pleasant week-end at the R.B.N. Club, 194, Queen's Gate. I was much struck by the truly beautiful house, which most nurses, especially the R.B.N.A. nurses, already know about.

Everything seems to have been so well thought out to give comfort and a feeling of homeliness. The food is excellent and served with such refinement. Nurses needing a home when disengaged, or at any time, are fortunate in having so delightful a place at their disposal as the Royal British Nurses' Club.

Miss Isabel Macdonald is a very busy person; her duties seem to be endless, but carried out with great charm and tact.

I shall look forward with much pleasure to renewing my visit at some future time.

Yours faithfully,

ELEANOR E. JARVIS, S.R.N., M.R.B.N.A.
15, Kenilworth Road,
St. Leonards-on-Sea.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

NURSING NOT A FACTOR IN PUBLIC HEALTH WORK.

A Public Health Worker writes:—"In my opinion a very serious situation has arisen as a result of the Ministry of Health Memorandum 65, with its authoritative assertion that preference shall be given in future to candidates holding Diplomas of the Board of Education, and not necessarily any nursing qualification for Public Health work. The sooner the "Memo." gets pigeon-holed the better, but there is no relying on such a simple escape, neither is it safe to count on justice at the time of selection for an appointment. I am having sent to you copies of the three resolutions that were passed at a meeting of the Workers Section of S.W.W. and Maternity Centres in case you find space to follow up the plea for Registration, and Reciprocal Standards with Scotland, in your fearless fight for the best of standards in all branches of the care of life."

[Now that the Nurses' Governing Body, the G.N.C., is controlled by a medical autocracy (supported by the vote of the College Group of nurses, and titled laywomen who know nothing of our professional affairs) it is inevitable that Nursing should sink lower and lower in the scale of women's avocations. Cheap charity and patronage are slowly undermining all sense of professional responsibility in the ranks of trained nurses. They realise merit has little to do with promotion.—ED.]

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTIONS.

November 24th.—Describe the nursing of a case of vesico-vaginal fistula that has had an operation for closure of the fistula.

December 1st.—What do you know of the different types of psoriasis, and of the constitutional and local treatment.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)