

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 NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

In reference to a letter from Miss G. R. Hale, the Secretary of the British College of Nurses, which appeared in our June issue, reminding Fellows and Members that their Annual Subscriptions of £2 2s. and £1 1s., respectively, are due on July 1st, and stating that the College is now firmly established on a strong financial foundation, and that it is for the first time in the history of our profession a body entirely composed of and governed by nurses, Miss E. L. C. Eden writes that the National Union of Trained Nurses was that, and adds "the only thing that is left to us of the N.U.T.N., after our twenty years' struggle, is the knowledge that at all events we were the first society consisting entirely of nurses, and governed entirely by them. We began otherwise, of course, but for some years previous to dissolution the N.U.T.N. was *entirely* governed by nurses, and only fully trained nurses could join."

Miss Violetta Thurstan also writes of the N.U.T.N.: "I was organising Secretary until I left England for War work, and I know that the Constitution made it impossible for any but trained nurses to vote. There was a great struggle, and finally a split in the Society, before the principle was triumphantly carried."

We know well the gallant fight made by the N.U.T.N. for self government. No one more admires the way in which it was evolved, through much tribulation and as a result of conscientious conviction, from the Nurses' Social Union, not composed entirely of trained nurses, and the splendid work which it did subsequently, in conjunction with other Nurses' Associations in promoting State Registration of Nurses, and in protecting and promoting the interests of nurses in every possible way. No one regrets more than we do the methods by which its disintegration was eventually brought about by a more powerful society not composed exclusively of nurses.

Various sectional societies of nurses, such as the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, were also self-governing, in the sense that they were composed exclusively of trained nurses.

But, with the possible exception of the Nurses' Trade Union, founded some years later than the National Union of Trained Nurses, the members of no society of nurses with which we are acquainted paid an Annual Subscription which could possibly be regarded as placing it on a "strong financial basis," which was the special point Miss Hale was emphasising in the letter referred to.

To be really self-governing, the annual income of a society derived from subscriptions must be on a scale to make it financially secure, and this has certainly not been the case in the past. The subscriptions—of a few shillings at most—of the many (often unpaid) have been supplemented largely by the generosity of the few.

But Miss Eden need not fear. The principles which the little green star of the N.U.T.N. represents, its aspirations, hopes, loyalty to ideals, self-sacrifice in the cause of right, even to the death, are in the ascendant now, and must ultimately prevail. In the meantime it has "spoken a word for freedom" without counting the cost, and is held in honour by all those who understand. We salute it, as we salute the memorials of soldiers fallen in a gallant fight.

"NURSING HISTORY AS SHE IS WROTE."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM, — May I be permitted to refer to the "True Tale with a Moral" which appeared last month.

As the nurse at the Cowdray Club who exclaimed indignantly "Hottentot" upon hearing the criminally ignorant statement made by a colleague that "Mrs. Fenwick was the woman who worked *against* State Registration for thirty years," I was addressing her as a "Hottentot"—(that means a very ignorant person)—and it did not of course refer to Mrs. Fenwick, who as every nurse ought to know worked *for* and *won* State Registration for Nurses—opposed for thirty years by many of those who now pose as pioneers.

I make this explanation owing to the expressed indignation of several of my colleagues who surmised I was alluding to our Registration pioneer, and not to one totally ignorant of the history of nursing education. The fact is the word slipped out—I felt so furious.—Yours truly,

"ONE WHO WORKED FOR REGISTRATION."

A QUESTION OF ORGANISATION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It seems to me from the report in the B.J.N. last month that pupils in training may have to give months of extra service in hospitals, if they happen to enter Training Schools at an inconvenient date in relation to the State Examinations. Every September I notice in the Medical journals a whole number devoted to the arrangements of the medical Schools which open simultaneously. Why should not the same be done in relation to the Nursing Schools, instead of taking in probationers at different times? Candidates for Election for the next General Nursing Council might be asked their views on this subject, and whether if elected they would advocate pressure being brought to bear on the Training Schools on this matter which, in my view, is entirely a question of organisation.

S. R. N.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

APPROVAL OF THE DIPLOMA.

Miss Rhoda Metherell, F.B.C.N., writes.—"The Diploma reached me packed so beautifully that it arrived in perfect condition. It is a lovely thing and I am indeed proud to possess it . . . It always has been an uplift to me to be associated with our President and Miss Brey (and in the past with our dear Sister Cartwright) as I realised our goal was being reached by strength of character, determination and honour."

Miss Winifred Hic in writes.—"I received the Diploma safely, and am very proud to possess it. I should have loved to be present on the great occasion on Diploma Day, but one cannot always arrange these things in hospital life."

"I read the addresses and proceedings in the B.J.N., and feel sure that our President and her band of workers deserve every praise for the wonderful way in which it has all been organised. The President's speech was a master work of thought and personality, and I must thank her for all that she has done for the Nursing Profession."

Miss Sarah M. Round writes from India.—"I hope to receive my Diploma when home on leave," she writes. "Now I am a Fellow I want to tell others of this wonderful Gift, and get its value known. Such a goodly heritage must become world known."

A Canadian Fellow of the B.C.N. writes.—"I do believe in giving honour to whom honour is due, the Scroll of Honour surrounding our Diploma, on which the names of so many far-sighted, courageous and devoted pioneers at home and in our Dominions appear, makes it unique and invaluable to us of the younger generation who have benefited by their labours."

"Specially pleased am I to note the name of our dear Miss Agnes Snively, still in our midst, I am happy to say, on the Scroll. She well deserves the honourable niche, for her fine example to all Canadian Nurses, and making it possible for us to enjoy National and International association with our colleagues throughout the world."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION FOR AUGUST.

Give the appearance and nursing care of a case of encephalitis lethargica.

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