

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 FLOOD RELIEF COMMISSION.

Department of Hygiene and Sanitation (Hupeh Office).

The following letter has been received from Miss Gladys Stephenson by the Secretary of the British College of Nurses.

HANKOW, 29/10/31.

DEAR SECRETARY,—You will perhaps have read of the disastrous floods in Central China this past summer. Our Union Hospital suffered very badly, being flooded to a depth of 17 feet and still now has six feet of water in it.

Typhoon storms played havoc with the buildings, beating the lake into an angry sea with waves four feet high dashing down good brick hospital buildings and staff residences, etc. We had a hectic time when the utterly unexpected flood water first invaded the hospital, trying to move the patients upstairs from the ground floor wards and then seeking to rescue, drugs, dispensary apparatus, out-patient department furniture, etc., etc., racing the water as it rose until we were forced to leave the rest behind. I managed to get my desk moved out of my office, but had no time to save anything but the desk. Last week, after nearly three months, the water receded to a point where I could row by boat round my office windows and look for some of my furniture, files, etc., which I feared would be quite soaked out of recognition. To my great surprise, I found nothing whatever, furniture, pictures on walls, all my teaching library absolutely disappeared, the floor risen up bodily filling the space between ceiling and ground and one wall knocked completely out. Probably everything had been swept out by the storms. On one of the walls I expected to find my B.C.N. diploma and my State Registration Certificate. My plan had been to dry them if possible and send them home, asking that they be replaced. As they have quite gone, I can only tell you about it and ask if I may have a new B.C.N. Diploma, please.

The Ministry of Health here are doing splendidly with medical relief. They asked me to be Director of Nursing for the emergency hospitals opened in these cities. We have eight hospitals and soon will have two more. I work with two members of the committee who are in charge of the hospitals. Dr. Borcie, the League of Nations representative and Dr. King of the Nanking Government Ministry of Health. There are five sections of the Relief Commission, one dealing with food distribution, one with Hygiene and sanitation (our dept.), one with clothing, one with construction of the dykes and one with providing accommodation for the refugees. It is an appalling problem, but it is most thrilling to see the way China is really tackling it and trying to save her people. We who have known China long, have not before seen such good work done.

Yours sincerely,

G. E. STEPHENSON.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

E. E. W. writes from Auckland, New Zealand: "I came over here to take the special course in Infant, Child Welfare, and Mothercraft, at the Karitane Harris Hospital in Dunedin. I found it most interesting, and I am indeed glad that I came over to take it. I am now looking forward to getting back to my own work in Tasmania.

"There is a great deal of unemployment among private nurses over here, as well as in Australia. If things do not alter soon it is likely to be a very serious problem. It is

certainly not advisable for private nurses to come over here at the present time."

Miss Gertrude Young, M.B.C.N., writes from U.M.C.A., Milo, Tukuyu, Tanganyika Territory: "I look forward each month to the JOURNAL with news of College activities. I have had a busy time lately, quite a number of pneumonia patients. Milo weather is very like that in England. We are over 7,000 feet above Lake Nyasa, and we get it very cold with plenty of thick mists. The district is very beautiful, but not easy when safari (journey) work is done, the hills are most trying. The Wa Pangwa are a most attractive tribe, in the villages they are rather dirty sometimes, the water is cold, coming from the hillside, so they don't like washing. They only wear a goat skin, therefore it is not surprising that so many of them get frightful coughs.

"Yaws is now practically cured round about here, we are too high for mosquitoes, and my patients mostly suffer from ulcers and chest troubles, and there are a few maternity cases; they are quite good in sending when they want help. So often the people of the Lake wait until it is too late, but these people come very often beforehand to tell me. The language is very difficult, it isn't always easy to make oneself understood."

A Fellow of the British College of Nurses writes: "Since hearing Miss Le Geyt's most interesting address at the Opening Session of the B.C.N., I have been very interested to read in the *Lancet* of October 24th that Dr. Langdon Brown, the incoming President of the Medical Society of Individual Psychology, took for the subject of his Presidential Address, 'The Return to Æsculapius,' and prefaced it by saying that a striking feature of twentieth-century medicine is the return to the cult of Æsculapius—namely, cleanliness, fresh air, suggestion, dream analysis and psychological explanation. Those of your readers who do not ordinarily see the *Lancet* may like to have their attention drawn to the article."

An N.C.N. delegate writes: "I cannot express to you how greatly I enjoyed the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Nurses which I had the privilege of attending as a League delegate. What a pity we do not have more of such meetings to enlighten the younger nurses or encourage us to realise our responsibilities. I came away full of admiration for the masterly conduct of business, the harmony in which the items on the Agenda were discussed, and the vision which animates our Hon. Officers. I intend to do all I can to help financially and also to save money month by month to enable me to attend the Paris-Brussels meeting in 1933. I shall read my *B.J.N.* eagerly to see how the Florence Nightingale Memorial progresses."

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR JANUARY, 1932.

What do you understand by a premature infant? What are the signs of prematurity? Describe the nursing care of such an infant.

LAST WORDS FOR 1931.

I stood upon the mountain which o'erlooks
The valley of destruction and I saw
Things strange, surpassing wonder; but to give
Utterance to things unutterable, to paint
In dignity of language suitable
The majesty of what I then beheld,
Were past the power of man. No fabled Muse
Could breathe into my soul such influence
Of her seraphic nature, as to express
Deeds inexpressible by loftiest rhyme,

From Early Poems by Alfred Tennyson, aged 14.

God gave his children memory
That in Life's garden there might be
June roses in December.