

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.

A WORD OF SINCERE THANKS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I cannot refrain from sending you a word of sincere thanks for the August number of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, which is a wonderful record, which I shall always cherish, of the recent International Congress of Nurses. You say it is an impossible task to attempt to report the work of the great International Congress of Nurses in the space at your disposal, and no doubt that is so, but it appears to me you have come as near to achieving the impossible as possible, and given us in this one issue a review which puts on record for us all the most important features of the Congress, both professional and also the hospitality which was offered to the Congress beginning with the gracious Reception by Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary in the garden at Buckingham Palace, by the Lord Great Chamberlain at the House of Lords by permission of His Majesty the King, by the Minister of Health on behalf of His Majesty's Government, by the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress of London at the historic Guildhall, and other delightful functions too numerous to mention here, but of which I, with many others, enjoyed every minute.

Most heartily did I endorse the thanks offered by Miss Francis at the last meeting to you (as Chairman of the Congress Committee), to your associates, committees and sub-committees, for the most stimulating Programme, and for the perfection of the arrangements for the Congress of this unforgettable week. And, indeed, of the long list of thanks, one would not willingly have missed one.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours ever gratefully,

CONGRESS MEMBER.

GREETINGS APPRECIATED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I send, through our JOURNAL, a word of appreciation to Miss Albinia Brodrick for her letter and greetings which I was so pleased to see in the August number? It is a far cry to the London Congress of 1909, but never shall I forget the part played by Miss Brodrick during that memorable week. Her paper, "Morality in Relation to Health," made a deep impression on me. It required courage to broach the subject of the venereal diseases in those days, for the taboo of silence was almost complete, and although nurses came in contact in hospital wards with these diseases in their infectious stages they received no instruction as to protecting themselves from infection. Miss Brodrick broke down the silence, and with thoroughness, earnestness and delicacy gave some appalling statistics as to the prevalence of these diseases and their disastrous effects, and she said, in conclusion:

"These diseases are eradicable from the human race, innocent and guilty alike desire to see them eradicated; therein lies the chief strength of our cause. . . ."

"The trumpet call to arms has sounded already. America has risen to rally round the white banner. Let us follow her lead. We are awakening. We, too, will get us from our sloth. We are ready to answer to the battle cry. Bitter opposition and paralysing indifference will be encountered. We shall be evil spoken of. We shall be misunderstood, for we stand here, nurses and fellow citizens of this vast city called Life, face to face with a fight unparalleled in the history of nations.

"In serried battalions over against us are set the hosts of the ignorant, the prudish, the timid, the vicious, the alcoholic, and the feeble-minded. We stand the leaders of a forlorn hope, in the eyes of our fellowmen, doubly disgraced if we fail, for by success alone can we be justified. We must succeed. What though each one of us be beaten to her knees in the struggle? We will fight on. What though we faint from the stress of conflict and weary for the loneliness of our toil? We will fight on. What though we fail? We will fight on.

"Form square and stand shoulder to shoulder, nation to nation, fighting for the human race, fighting for our national reputation, fighting for the God-given right of health for innocent women and children. . . ."

"So let us stand, steadfast, unfearing. We dare not fail. Nay, we cannot fail. For the weapons of our warfare are Knowledge, Unity and Love unbounded; the legend on our banner is Light and the aim of our strife is Peace. Hail, comrades, and God speed to victory."

I have quoted at length because Miss Brodrick's paper made an indelible impression upon me. Had I heard no other of the many presented, to have heard that one alone would have been well worth while to cross the ocean. Not at first was the effect very noticeable. Teaching as to the venereal diseases was still not given in the majority of Nursing Schools. But the silence had been broken; the curriculum of training of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales includes instruction in this subject, special departments in many of the hospitals are now provided which sufferers from these diseases can attend, and the statistics given by the Minister of Health in his Annual Report show that these diseases are diminishing. When we realise this, let us remember that it was a trained nurse who drew aside the veil with which mock modesty concealed the evil thing in our midst. Let us, too, stand steadfast, unfearing, for still the fight goes on. Who can doubt it that walks abroad in London to-day? God speed to victory.

Yours faithfully,

FOUNDATION MEMBER, I.C.N.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

An Appreciative Reader writes: "I was so pleased to find in the last issue of the JOURNAL that Mr. King's lecture on the 'Detachment of the Retina' was reported, for ophthalmic nursing is a subject in which I am very interested, and I was so disappointed that I was unable to get to the College to hear Mr. King deliver his lecture on this subject."

A Member, British College of Nurses writes: "The report presented by the Treasurer at the Annual Meeting of the British College of Nurses was a most interesting and inspiring document, and I should like to put on record my thanks to Dr. Bedford Fenwick for his invaluable work for us. We are indeed fortunate in having two such friends as yourself as President and Dr. Fenwick as Treasurer."

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PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR OCTOBER.

What is influenza? Describe the treatment (1) preventive, and (2) of a patient suffering from an attack of this disease.

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