

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 TEST EDUCATIONAL EXAMINATION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am surprised that so much apprehension is expressed by Matrons and Sisters as to the effect of the Test Educational Examination instituted by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales for young women desirous of entering the Nursing Profession. To my mind this will be a very useful piece of work to the credit of the Council of which the sands are now running out so quickly. For consider what will be the effect of this simple Educational Examination. It will eliminate those whose education is manifestly so lacking that they would be unable to benefit from the professional instruction given to them when they enter a hospital, and who, at a later date, would have to be eliminated and swell the ranks of those women who, with a little insight into nursing gained in a few months' hospital experience, in many instances continue to nurse the sick, and find work as private nurses to the danger of the public, and to the injury of Registered Nurses.

If the unsuitability of these women for the Nursing Profession can be discovered before they enter a hospital for training, surely it is an excellent thing. Nowadays nurses are expected to be competent to perform many delicate and difficult procedures, demanding intelligent appreciation of their responsibilities, and it is the duty of those in charge of training schools to do their utmost to ensure that only those who it may be hoped are capable of corresponding intelligently to the training given shall have the opportunity and privilege of receiving it.

I therefore heartily welcome this effort on the part of the General Nursing Council, and believe that it will tend to attract more suitable candidates rather than lessen them as some seem to fear.

"A PRACTICAL WOMAN."

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"The Prison of the Future."

A Psychologist writes: "As a Registered Nurse, deeply interested in Psychology and Mental Hygiene, I have been greatly interested in the article 'The Prison of the Future' in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, and also in the news that the Home Secretary is planning a three-year programme of prison reform. Mr. Samuel Bates, addressing the first International Congress on Mental Hygiene in this country, stated that the prison of the future will, amongst other things, give a prominent place to the hospital and the mental hygiene clinic, and those with eyes trained to see, who visit our prisons, will realise that many of those incarcerated need the supervision of the psychiatrist, although the atmosphere of a prison must no doubt be stern and teach discipline. Mr. Bates emphasised that schools for prison officers must be established, in which are taught the science and theory of criminology, elementary medicine and first-aid. If this were done it would be a great step forward."

Is this Right or Just?

Private Nurse writes: "As a State Registered Nurse I have built up a very good connection as a private Nurse. It appears to me that if the College of Nursing has its way this will have a very injurious effect upon those of us who, tired of restrictions, have adopted a line of our own. Is this right or just? I am prepared to recognise loyally the authority of the General Nursing Council in professional matters, but I resent the College of Nursing assuming the

right to interfere with my ability to earn my living as I please."

A Good Nurse Loves Serving.

"Thank you so much for the last issue of 'B.J.N.' We Queen's Nurses, who live in country places, would be quite in the dark professionally if it was not for the 'B.J.N.' I always feel bucked up after reading it, and wish I could take a more active part in supporting its policy, which is a self-respecting one; but in practice we 'Queens' do try to keep up the policy of 'patients first,' which is a fundamental principle of the 'B.J.N.' I agree with the writer of the 'Kernel' in this month's issue, 'A good nurse loves serving.' That is it, one experiences a sort of glow when helping to relieve pain."

Something New.

"Tired of Twaddle" writes: "The Athenians are not the only people who thirsted for news, novelty and change. We all tire of monotony, so there may be little surprise that the apple thrown into the nursing arena by the T.U.C. General Council—the so-named Charter of Privileges—will be eagerly picked up in the hope of testing a new and luscious fruit.

"Let us hope it will not turn to ashes in the mouth!

"Personally, I am tired of twaddle and have ceased to expect 9d. for 4d.

"Nurses take life far too seriously. I was amazed at the earnestness of colleagues at the recent Congress from all over the world. The gauzy fripperies of the Philippones were indeed a relief."

Nurses cannot Down Tools.

State Registered Nurse: "There is a good deal said just now about the proposals of the Guild of Nurses, and of the Labour Party as to the nurses' hours off duty under the Bill, the second reading of which was lost by so narrow a majority in the House of Commons on December 3rd. 'Patients are not like machinery,' they say. 'You cannot down tools just because the clock strikes.' But what is the difficulty. Do nurses in hospitals and institutions, with which the 'Local Authorities' Bill alone is concerned, ever go off duty before they are relieved? I have yet to know of a hospital where this is done.

The question in regard to private nurses is much more difficult, I admit, but the Labour Party has not so far tackled that. In hospitals and institutions the real difficulty is the financial one. It always is, however discreetly this point may be veiled."

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NOTICE.

AS THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING is a monthly paper the Editor will be greatly obliged if items of news which the readers desire included are sent to her as early as possible, as they often arrive just after the JOURNAL has gone to press.

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR JANUARY.

What are the predisposing causes of Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Hæmorrhage?

What are the duties of a Midwife in dealing with these conditions?

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