

## 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 NIGHTINGALE TRAINING SCHOOL,  
ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I am engaged in preparing a history of the Nightingale Training School for Nurses, St. Thomas's Hospital. If any of your readers have any material such as letters, reports, photographs or anything else bearing on the history of the School or of its members I should be very grateful if they will communicate with me. Any material sent will be carefully copied and returned as promptly as possible.

Yours faithfully,

LUCY SEYMER.

(Mrs. Seymer, 30, Bramham Gardens,  
London, S.W.5.)

## THE 1930 FUND.

(For the benefit of Trained District Nurses.)

DEAR MADAM,—In dealing with applications from Nurses for help from this Fund we have been, as a Committee, impressed by the frequency with which two factors contribute to their financial difficulties.

The first is an astonishingly widespread ignorance of the provisions of the National Health Insurance Act as it affects them. They frequently allow their insurance contributions to lapse altogether after retiring or, even more frequently, they continue to "put on stamps" in what is strictly speaking, an illegal way. This may mean reduction in, or loss of, ordinary benefit, but is even more serious when the question of pension at 65 arises. At worst it may mean the loss of this; at best it means delay and difficulty in establishing their claim to it.

Even when contributions are in order nurses frequently do not realise the benefits to which they are entitled, even after pensionable age, and find themselves straitened financially by paying expenses toward which they could have had substantial help.

While certain Insurance Societies are very helpful to their members, there are others who do not assist with either information or advice and who in fact, may be said, in practice, if not in intention, to discourage applications.

The second factor is the prevalent custom of investing savings in the purchase (usually on mortgage) of a house, with the idea of taking in patients, convalescents, or ordinary paying guests. Such patients or guests are seldom forthcoming, and even if they are so the venture is on too small a scale to be profitable. The income will not meet the necessary expenses, mortgage interest, repairs and renewals, and there is no capital left on which to fall back. The result is inevitably that the mortgage is foreclosed or the house has to be sold at a heavy loss, the nurse is left stranded with savings gone, while she herself is older and probably impaired in health by overwork and worry. My Committee are so deeply concerned by constantly recurring examples of these two types that they are anxious that the matter should have as full publicity as possible amongst members of the Nursing profession. They will be very grateful therefore if you will be good enough to publish this letter.

Yours truly,

CAMPBELL RHODES,  
Chairman.

The Editor, THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING,  
39, Portland Place, London, W.1.

## KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

## Deep Appreciation for Thoughtfulness.

We have pleasure in publishing the following extract from a letter sent to Mrs. Rome, Matron-in-Chief, British Red Cross Society, by Miss Ida F. Butler, Director of Nursing of the American Red Cross, Washington:—

"It has been suggested that I write you regarding an incident which has occurred in connection with our Ohio and Mississippi Valley Flood disaster and I am hoping that you will be able to include it in some of your reports which will be printed so that possibly we may be able to reach the kindly soul who thought of us during this trying period.

"A package came to the Red Cross one day, addressed to the Director of Nursing. It was postmarked England but the place in England could not be deciphered. Upon opening it I found three beautifully knitted baby jackets, white with blue border, and an unsigned note which merely said that the jackets 'were for three of the flood babies' and that the sender would not give her name in order that we might not be obliged to acknowledge the gift. It was really very touching and I was anxious to have those jackets go to babies in whom we had some particular interest. I found that a baby had been born during the height of the flood in Evansville, Indiana. The mother and baby were cared for by our Red Cross nurse and the baby was named 'Noah.' One of the jackets went to him.

"In Missouri, twins were born. The family were cared for by the Red Cross and these two babies were named after the rivers which had caused the flood in this particular area—the names were St. Francis and Little River—and the other two jackets went to these babies.

"Through you the American Red Cross would like to express its deep appreciation for this thoughtfulness on the part of someone. We would really have liked to know who sent the jackets so that a personal letter might have gone to the sender. It was, however, suggested that I write the incident to you and that probably you would be able to give it some publicity so that the sender of the jackets might eventually read of our appreciation."

## The Voice of the Electorate.

A Sister Tutor writes: "I read with warm approval the letter in February *B.J.N.* signed 'The Vote Covers All.' We have now a magnificent Headquarters in Portland Place, in which it is to be hoped there is a Reception Room for Registered Nurses. Surely, as the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession in England and Wales, the General Nursing Council should encourage Registered Nurses to look upon this Residence as the centre of nursing education in this country, as well as a Disciplinary Body, and consultation with those of us engaged in teaching student nurses should be encouraged. I, for one, very strongly object to the supposition that philanthropic persons who know nothing of the needs of professional education should have power to define our standards. Many Sister Tutors feel this way."

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## PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR APRIL.

Describe the Nursing Care in a Case of Colostomy.

We regret we were unable to award a Prize this month, no paper of sufficient merit having been received.

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