

## 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.*

## RIGHT ROUND THE WORLD.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—Having lately returned from a cruise right round the world, I thought you might perhaps care to hear my impressions of some of the hospitals *en route*, and of the general conditions. I may add that at Hong Kong I had five reporters outside my cabin door at 8 a.m., wanting to know my ideas on nursing! I was reported several times and took care to say I belonged to the British College of Nurses. Should you consider any of this letter interesting enough for the *B.J.N.* I should be very pleased. And first of all, I may say, that everywhere we went, I was struck by the splendid hospitals, even in the small places. The finest building in the best position was always the hospital. They were large airy buildings, with covered ways leading from block to block, and large balconies round every story.

I am glad to say, too, that our humble friends were not forgotten! I saw several "vets" houses, and animals' hospitals, with grazing fields, and in Ceylon natives were bringing their animals for treatment.

At Tiberias I went over the Scottish Memorial Hospital there, where Dr. Torrance, a charming Lady Doctor, and an English staff are doing a very good work among Jews and Arabs in the same wards. One ward was set apart for English Tommies, and three were there with broken legs, due to the lorry being overturned on the rough road. The hospital was clean and well kept and I am afraid they must be very hard worked now with all this trouble. How sad it all is, especially in that land and at that place our Lord loved so well! The scenery was lovely: snow crowned Mount Hermon, with the blue sea of Galilee at its foot! This hospital badly wants a new operation table, but otherwise their theatre was good.

At Hong Kong, the Sister, E. Riley, also a member of the B.C.N., is Sister at the Government Hospital at Kamloon. She had tea with us on our boat and sent love to all her friends. We went to and from the hospital by rickshaw and were much interested in all we saw. A large Out-Patient Department and good Hospital in its own grounds, with the Nurses' Home in the grounds also. The Nurses' bedrooms are the best I have seen anywhere; two sleep in one large, high, airy room with a balcony! There are Chinese Doctors and also English, the Matron, Sister and Staff Nurses are English, but the Nurses are Chinese and very good. I was much struck by the quietness, cleanliness and good nursing. We were shown the babies' ward, each one in its tiny cot, covered with netting. We saw one born that morning, a fine boy. The little Chinese mother looked well and was most cheerful, and I was told that they get on so well that they are seldom in for more than eight days. All patients come in very clean, as a general rule, and the standard of cleanliness is higher than in England. I was much struck by the high standard of efficiency shown everywhere and by the quietness in the wards. I had, last month, to visit a friend in a ward of one of our leading London Hospitals. It was an old-fashioned ward, it is true, but the stuffy atmosphere, the electric light had to be burnt *all day*, and the dreadful noise, children in the ward, as well as adults, contrasted very unfavourably with the well-aired and quiet wards of the foreign Hospitals! I felt strongly that in the greatest city in the world such wards ought not to be! The nursing, too, I was told, was very inefficient. Nurses now, it seems to me, have too much off-time and patients are

neglected in consequence. I wonder what these young ladies would say to the 12-hour day and one day a month "off," of our training days! The cry seems to be for an easier life for nurses, but I think it is made too easy! I have just been over one of our latest Nurses' Homes of one of our largest London Hospitals. It struck me as a luxury hotel! Sun-bathing roof, rest rooms, writing rooms, shampoo rooms, ironing rooms, gym, swimming pool, etc.!!

I heard of no shortage of Nurses abroad and I was struck by the keenness shown in the hospitals. The American hospitals are really magnificent buildings and very well organised; all classes seem to go to them and they are very efficient. I was interested to hear, however, that our standard of medicine and surgery and nursing is still considered the highest. On our boat, the *Empress of Britain*, we had one of the best operating theatres I have ever seen, large wards for men and women, dispensary with dispenser, two Doctors, one Dentist and three Nurses. We had several operations on the cruise and the standard of the Doctors and Nurses, all English, was a very high one.

I hope I have not bored you with this long letter and that you will find some of it, anyhow, interesting!

With my best wishes for all the work you do for us.

Yours very sincerely,

MARGARET C. BEVAN, M.B.C.N., S.R.N.

P.S.—The Kamloon Hospital Staff was helping with the refugees and I hope they will be kept safe!

## THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, TOOWOOMBA.

In June of this year we published an article by Miss Euphemia Torry on the General Hospital, Toowoomba, Queensland, which was subsequently printed in the local paper. The Secretary, Mr. D. McInnes, has now sent to us certain corrections and explanatory remarks. "It is not correct," he says, "to say that the hospital has an X-ray for photographic work only, as fluoroscopic work is done with the plant and 15 or 20 cases of therapy per year. Certainly no deep-ray and radium therapy is done, as the Department of Health ruled that as these methods were so very costly, and required highly skilled specialists, they should only be established in three centres in the State—Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville."

In refutation of the statement that the Matron's repeated requests for repainting went unheeded, Mr. McInnes states that the Board has spent £1,628 in repairs and painting in the last five years.

In regard to "The Golden Casket," an authorised lottery, drawn about once a month, which Miss Torry says provides £10 a bed towards building and equipment of hospitals, but nothing for upkeep, Mr. McInnes says this should read more accurately that the Government gives, in addition to grants for building and equipment purposes, an annual allowance of £10 per occupied bed towards maintenance.

The number of beds given is apparently not strictly accurate and the statement that the hospital "is staffed by 13 Sisters and 63 nurses," should read "the hospital is staffed by 15 trained nurses and 66 trainees."—(Editor).

## THE "BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING" AND THE "MIDWIFE" SUPPLEMENT, FOUNDED 1888,

is the official Organ of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain. The Official Supplement of the Royal British Nurses' Association is incorporated in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. Price, 7s. annually, including postage. Apply, MANAGER, 39, Portland Place, London, W.1.

## PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR DECEMBER.

What is a Dislocation? Its Causes and Varieties. Its Symptoms, Signs and Treatment.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)