

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 TRUE NURSING SPIRIT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

During the whole long years of the war nothing has been more gratifying than the evidence of loyalty to the homeland from our colleagues in Australia, and the courage and energy of all Australian nurses associated with us at home and abroad. Apparently there is nothing they would not do to help win the war. Miss May Ashton, of Mount Lawley, Western Australia, is one of the most generous in this connection. In a recent letter received from her she writes:—

"Yesterday I went to the store where I order the parcels to be sent to England, so in due course I hope you will receive another cake and 2 lb. of dried fruit. Last October the Government stopped food parcels being sent to England. (Last year the Council of the B.C.N. enjoyed a delicious cake, as fresh as if baked at home.) I am enclosing cuttings in reference to nursing here. We put up a protest about the Military wanting the V.A.D.s to do two months in civilian hospitals after two years in Military hospitals, which plan is in abeyance at present. The authorities here asked that in the churches this morning the Ministers would draw attention to the hospitals shortage of attendants, which is most acute. All nurses who now finish their training, unless kept on as staff nurses, are sent for six or 12 months to the country hospitals, but I do not think the man-power can compel nurses to go to the hospitals for the insane, poor things, and they do need sympathetic nursing. We have had a very hot summer in Western Australia, very little rain, so the stone fruit is disappointing, but grapes are wonderful, and as the Government gave orders for less wine to be made and fruit dried, we hope G.B. will get a much greater amount than last year. The growers all report a wonderful crop.

I suppose you know about the disastrous fires in the State of Victoria, worse than 1939. Many valuable lives lost, thousands of sheep and cattle and agricultural land destroyed, over 500 homes destroyed, two hospitals, though the patients were rescued. We have had many fires in this State this summer, fortunately no lives lost.

There is a question of our butter ration being reduced—we have $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. a week—some think to 6 oz. We have far more variety of food than you have and we have not felt any pinch as you have. Our meat ration is good. They are taking a number of men from the Army to go back to the land as the food position is rather serious. Much more wheat will be required to feed the nations. Canada, the U.S.A., Argentine and Australia will be called upon to supply that need. Sheep are more numerous here, but all will be required. I notice "Jerry" has been very busy over London lately (alas! yes).

It will be a wonderful day when peace is declared, and may it be very soon.

I read the report of the Matron-in-Chief of Q.A.I.M.N.S., how wonderful they have all been. Now they are experiencing biting winds and snow after desert sands and heat, even then at night it could be piercingly cold. Our nurses in the Islands are also working under very trying conditions, but it is marvellous how comfortable they make the men, and they do not wish to leave their hospitals in spite of burning heat, tropical rains, and insects of all kinds. Kindest regards to you all."

SISTER TUTORS TRAINED IN INDIA.

Irwin Hospital, New Delhi.

DEAR MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK,—My thoughts often fly to you in England in appreciation of all you are doing and have always done, for Nursing. I also always hope that you are being kept safe through many perils. Here in India we try to keep "the flag flying," but the difficulties are great.

The hospitals are in many cases very short of sanctioned staff and the sanctioned strength of Nursing personnel is always woefully deficient. The Trained Nurses' Association of India does a very great deal to raise the standard of Nursing and improve conditions and has really done a lot, but there is still a very great deal to do.

The war, of course, and its Nursing needs must come first, but the Association loses no opportunity. We were all very delighted when the Post Graduate School was achieved last April, and although it does not function quite in the way we hoped, it is doing very useful work and good foundations are being laid.

The first six "Sister Tutors" trained in India within its walls have just completed their course and are now starting on their duties in several Provinces or Presidencies. One Sister from this Hospital is amongst the six and she is returning here to start her work next week in the Leave Vacancy of our Sister Tutor, in the first instance. The war has hit the Hospitals very hard in many, many ways, and any progress is much hampered.

Food, fuel, and domestic problems are all present, but we have much to be thankful for. With very kind regards and many hopes for your safety in London.—Yours sincerely,

M. E. ABRAM.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"Up on Top."

A French Canadian writes: "I live in the wilds of Canada and look forward eagerly to my monthly BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING which has reached me every month for the past two years. Some mail—considering the thousands of miles between us. I mean, when war is over, to pay a visit to England and see all the wonders for myself. Not the least of them, the heroic nation which has done and died without a squeal and which will, of course, come up on top."

Only Serfs are taxed without Representation.

"Registered Nurse": I am as keen as you are not to be treated like a serf and be compelled to pay for the upkeep of unqualified nurses, but how is it to be prevented? If we refuse our annual dues we shall simply be removed from the State Register, and thus completely ruined."

[The Council of the British College of Nurses Ltd. has this wrong in mind, and every effort will be made to bring politicians to a sense of honourable conduct in the matter.—Ed.]

We have to apologise to Miss Jane C. Cowie for a printer's error which appeared in her very interesting note on the pioneer work of Mrs. Strong in our last issue: the word "postal" which was substituted for "portal" examination. In these days, when so many skilled compositors are at the front, it is a marvel the press keeps up its characteristic efficiency.

Miss Cowie reminds us that Mrs. Strong "was not the only Nightingale exponent in Scotland, which would cut out Miss Pringle, of Edinburgh, Florence Nightingale's 'Pearl of Great Price.'"—Ed.

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