

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 QUESTION FOR THE PUBLIC.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have received a copy of the following resolution, and trust you may be able to insert it in the next issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, as it is the first public protest of laymen and women on the subject as far as I am aware.

"The Yorkshire Union of National Clarion Cyclists' Clubs,

"Re the Nursing of Soldiers and Sailors,

"At the last meeting of the above Union, composed of cyclists from all parts of Yorkshire, a resolution was passed, protesting strongly against the Government employing untrained and inexperienced nurses. A large number of our comrades are now with the colours, in the fighting line; some have been wounded; and we feel that they are worthy of the very best attention. The best is not too good for them, and we hope that the powers that be will see to the employing of the many thousand of fully-qualified nurses at a remunerative salary, instead of accepting untrained voluntary nurses."

Yours most sincerely,

ALBINIA BRODRICK.

Ballincoona,
Co. Kerry.

[The Hon. Albinia Brodrick, herself a certificated nurse, midwife, sanitary inspector, and health visitor, recently interviewed editors of London daily papers on the subject of untrained nurses in military auxiliary hospitals (some holding the responsible position of Matrons), but one and all evaded publication of her information. An able résumé of the matter appeared recently over her signature in the *Clarion*, since which time her views have received convincing support in that weekly paper.—ED.]

VOLUNTEER VERSUS COMPULSORY
NURSING SERVICE FOR THE SICK
AND WOUNDED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—As a rule I do not answer personal attacks on myself by anonymous writers in your journal. They are too frequent, and it matters little or nothing what people who are afraid to sign their names think of me or my work. But I must, because it concerns my relationship towards a splendid set of workers, notice the letter signed "A Member of Bart.'s League," in which she writes that I "opposed the Territorial Force Nursing Service and the Volunteer Corps." What the Volunteer Corps is I do not know; I never heard of it, so I certainly never opposed it.

Emphatically I state that I never opposed the formation of the Territorial Force Nursing Service. I disliked, and dislike, the method of its organisation, but that is an entirely different matter. The country could not get on without some such organisation. I asked leave to state my objections at the Mansion House meeting, but was asked not to do so and so refrained.

This good lady accuses me of telling the Lady Mayoress that "she was the wickedest woman in London for helping to organise it." I shall be glad if your correspondent will verify this or apologise. It is as offensive as it is untrue.

Yours, &c.,

Kneesworth Hall, KNUTSFORD.
Royston.

[We are not aware of frequent anonymous attacks on Lord Knutsford in this journal. We frankly criticise his ungenerous policy towards our profession, and shall consider it our duty to do so as long as he obstructs its just organisation by the State, on the analogous lines of medicine and midwifery. Why should nursing alone remain a pariah in the community of healing, to be exploited and depreciated by every quack in Christendom?

Lord Knutsford's objection to the formation of the Territorial Force Nursing Service, on its present basis of inviting nurses to volunteer their services, instead of being selected and supplied by hospital authorities when necessity arose, is admitted in his letter. It will be remembered that at the time of the formation of the Service Miss E. S. Haldane, Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Council, speaking at a meeting at the Mansion House on January 18th, 1909, said that "there were some who considered it unnecessary to arrange for a Territorial Nursing Service in time of peace, considering it a better plan to provide the nurses along with the lint and the bandages in the event of invasion. She thought that women were inspired by patriotic feelings as well as men, and that there should be an appeal to them. Moreover, it was necessary that the nurses should be selected with great care when time and consideration could be given to this duty, which would be impossible in the turmoil of a great war," and at a public meeting of nurses held in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House on March 23rd of the same year, at which the Lord Mayor presided, Lady Helen Munro Ferguson emphasised the point that the Secretary of State for War (then the present Viscount Haldane) "had been trying to convert the nation to the necessity for timely preparation, and had done his best to put a close to the era of 'muddling through.' Eleventh hour patriotism was about as useless as the lamps of the foolish virgins. Some people were of opinion that the Advisory Board should go to the civil hospitals and ask them to guarantee a certain number of nurses, but there were various objections to this.

"The whole Territorial Force was organised on a voluntary basis, every unit was allowed to volunteer, there seemed no reason why nurses alone should be deprived of this privilege, and

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