

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 MARIE JOSÉ MEDAL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—On reading your paper to-day I noticed a paragraph relating to The Marie José Medal, given to the English Nurses—who nursed in Brussels before and after the Germans entered—as given by Belgian Red Cross Society. In a letter to the head doctor (which I had the privilege of seeing) at the Palais Royale, the Queen of the Belgians specially expressed a wish that all English Nurses were to receive this medal with her grateful thanks. I do not know whether this fact has been brought to your notice.

ONE WHO NURSED IN THE PALAIS.

[Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians is the President of the Belgian Red Cross Society, and those English Nurses who were awarded the Marie José Medal for nursing in Belgium in the early days of the war, will appreciate the fact that the grateful thanks of Queen Elisabeth prompted its bestowal.—ED.]

MOST UNFAIR TO TRAINED NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been working in Belgium and France on and off since the beginning of the War, and think trained nurses have grave cause of complaint against the societies which select and send out young, very inefficiently trained nurses as *trained*. These young women may start out as probationers, orderlies, ward maids, scrubbers, cooks, or what not, but they all wear our uniform and sooner or later nurse the wounded in the wards. Several French doctors, clever men, have remarked to me how surprisingly ignorant are "English Nurses," and it is useless to try to explain that they are amateurs. Then the discipline in several hospitals bossed by lay "directresses" leaves much to be desired. The Matron is usually ignored, and the nurses get entirely out of hand. I know several good women, who have resigned and left these lay-managed voluntary hospitals in disgust. This is a serious thing for the status of trained nursing in France, and one cannot wonder the ladies of the Croix Rouge wish we would all stay at home.

Yours truly,

TRAINED AND IGNORED.

QUALIFICATION ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL STANDARDS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I notice that while, in view of the imminent shortage of nurses, it is proposed

that women with varying periods of training in civil hospitals shall be admitted as workers in military hospitals, the proposition to meet the increasing shortage of medical practitioners in the military services, as well as in the civilian population, by giving legal status to the numerous unqualified assistants who "at one time acted as the right-hand men of general practitioners" meets with no favour.

I read in my morning paper in connection with the above proposition:—

"There is but one sure test of an individual's fitness to undertake the responsibilities of a physician or surgeon, and that is, of course, qualification according to official standard. Doubtless there may be men, such as senior students, dispensers, and one-time assistants, who have sufficient practical knowledge to carry out some of the regular daily tasks of a doctor, but it would be a dangerous precedent, and clearly not in the public interest, to license such without subjecting them to an academic ordeal."

It is precisely because the same holds good of members of the nursing profession that we fear the invasion of its ranks by women who enter them for a short term during the war. By all means increase as largely as possible the number of regular probationers in training, but it is not in the public interest to employ a number of unqualified persons who after the war will expect recognition as trained nurses.

Yours faithfully,

MATRON.

NOTICES.

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

Candidates for the French Flag Nursing Corps for service in France can be interviewed by arrangement with Lady Barclay, 60, Nevers Square, London, S.W. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will be at 431, Oxford Street, W., on Friday, May 28th, from 2.30 to 5 p.m., to see candidates, who must be well educated and hold a certificate for three years' training. Experience of fever nursing is an additional advantage. Nurses speaking French are preferred.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

June 5th.—Describe the disease known as black measles, and how to nurse it.

June 12th.—What is an intravenous infusion, and how is it applied?

June 19th.—What are the points to be observed in caring for a case of nervous shock.

June 26th.—What symptoms would lead you to apprehend the onset of (1) sapræmia, and (2) septicæmia in a lying-in woman?

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