

order to fulfil their engagements to the War Office when war broke out, and have been working at high pressure for the last four years. The majority of them are in charge of hospitals of anything between 1,000 and 2,000 beds, and few, if any, even now receive as much as £150 per annum. When it is remembered that these posts are only temporary, that there is no pension attached to them, and no certainty of post-war employment, it will be seen how unfavourably they compare with civil matronships, even in small hospitals, where the work and responsibility are infinitely less and where the position is an assured and permanent one.

I should like to add that *so far* the yearly bonus to which all members of the Territorial Force Nursing Service are entitled by the terms of their enrolment, has been paid *only* to those members who have been invalided from the service, and it now transpires that if from any cause, except ill-health, a member resigns before the end of the war she will forfeit every penny of it.

If you can find room for this letter in your widely-read journal I shall feel grateful.

Yours faithfully,

A CIVILIAN MATRON.

THE V.A.D. QUESTION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I give a concrete instance in support of the view that semi-trained nurses might be held to resemble, and possibly be treated like, Territorial officers. In the second year of the war I had much to do with the practical training and the supervision of a band of enthusiastic V.A.D.s. One of the best was the sister of the local draper, who himself enlisted in the Territorial battalion, and in less than six months earned a commission. He was a very gallant and efficient young officer and did valuable service before he gave his life for his country. Had he lived, he would, after the war, have returned to his business in the same simple spirit in which he left it (and practised it when on leave!). The sister yearned to serve her country in the same way. She could, by an effort, have been spared from home for a year or so, or as we then hoped for, the "duration of the war," and consulted me many times as to how she might at once get some real nursing to do. As far as she went she was very good, and had worked hard, but the three years' compulsory training was quite impossible for her; and if she eventually went as a special military probationer (for I have now lost sight of her), I suppose after one-and-a-half or two years she is still one! If all the nursing energies of the country were managed, as you suggest, by *one* central authority, no doubt these problems would be solved and waste of human material avoided; but it would (shall we say it *will*?) be a colossal task. I was much amused to find that one of my English-speaking friends, who has been

diligently reading the back numbers of the B.J.N., now talks glibly about *Vads* (as one syllable)!

I am, yours faithfully,

"RED CROSS WORKER."

Lyceum, Florence.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"Soldiers' Friend" writes: "Can nothing be done to supply sick soldiers with more food? In the hospital I visit men have a light tea at 4.30 and nothing more till breakfast at 7.30 next morning. Also convalescent soldiers I entertain are all hungry. How would our political mandarins get on without their substantial luncheon and good dinner at 8 p.m.?"

A Sister of Thirty:—"A Sister of Sixty," is the right sort. Since reading her letter, as I am to have my holiday in August, I have offered to work on the land. I feel sure I could help with the harvest, and as I love all animals should like to keep them clean and feed them. I have nothing but contempt for all these young society women who pose as patriots, but take care never to do a bit of real hard work for our country at this crisis. 'Merry Mummies' is a very good description of them, and our once self-respecting profession is the sentimental peg and excuse for their silly 'gambols.' We owe 'Beatrice Kent' a vote of thanks for her out-spoken courage. Let us hope Miss Asquith and her companions will take it to heart. Anyway we nurses have no respect for waste of time on social functions by young women able to *work*. Conscriptio of young unmarried women is what we approve."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

August 10th.—What have you learnt of new nursing methods in a Military Hospital?

August 17th.—What is pernicious anæmia? How have you seen it treated?

HOW TO HELP THE B.J.N.

1. Get new subscribers.
2. Send news and marked newspapers.
3. Secure new advertisers.
4. Read the advertisements.
5. Patronise the advertisers.
6. Tell the advertisers where you saw the advertisement.

OUR ADVERTISERS.

Do not omit to buy, as far as possible, everything you need from "Our Advertisers," and to recommend them to your friends. They are all first-class firms.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)