

amongst the latter-day philanthropists. 3rd. Certificates of efficiency do not and cannot specify characteristics, and many women hold hospital certificates, and most glowing testimonials from medical men, whose *temperaments* and characteristics would in the opinion of the experienced Superintendent of a Training School disqualify them for active service in the Army Nursing Service—and military hospitals. 4th. So much favouritism and jobbery has already been apparent in the selection of nurses for active service in South Africa, and a certain proportion of unsuitable women have already been selected, that the nursing world at home we fear will be unable to take it for granted that a body of unprofessional persons are incapable of being imposed upon by the pressure always brought to bear by those interested in pushing their candidates. 5th. Our correspondent makes a point of candidates having received their "full three years' training in one of our hospitals" (there are hospitals *and* hospitals) and says: "I have reason to believe that the same precautions have been taken by at least some of the ladies on the Yeomanry Hospital Committee." We have questioned this statement on page 113, on which we deal with this point. 6th. The argument that because there are differences of opinion in hospital and nursing circles during this very important period of transition in which nursing is evolving from the chrysalis of chaotic drudgery and inefficiency, into a highly skilled and responsible profession for educated women—that totally inexperienced and untrained women should assume command of the helm, is just the one irrefutable argument for speedy reform at the War Office, which is primarily responsible to the nation for the efficient nursing care of the sick or wounded sailor and soldier. That there is no Department of Nursing in conjunction with the Navy and Army Medical Departments, with trained supervision and sufficient organization to deal inclusively with the selection of all the nursing officials required, both in times of peace and war, is but one more blot on the escutcheon of the War Office. We opine, however, that in the speedy reorganization of this Office, a system of military nursing will be inaugurated which in any future war, will not leave our honoured sick and wounded defenders to the mercy of attendants selected by philanthropists and "Society Women." The lives of these brave men and breadwinners are far too dear to us all, to be made the sport of social patronage. A "Society Woman" gives us a well deserved rap over "party" prejudice, let us take the lesson to heart.—Ed.]

"WE DON'T WANT THE MATRONS."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I was thankful indeed at last to see your remarks in the NURSING RECORD on the unprofessional manner in which Sisters are being selected for service in South Africa by self-constituted Committees of unprofessional persons. It is almost impossible to believe that at the end of the nineteenth century, the large majority of the public still class trained nurses as domestic servants, and proceed to "engage" them upon the flimsy foundation of the grandiloquent testimonials so easily procurable by the "smart" modern nurses. In this hospital all the more excitable nurses are suffering from war hysteria, and are bombarding the War Office, the Reserve and Society Committees, to be sent out to nurse the soldiers, and many of the most unsuitable for this special work

have been selected. Matron is powerless to suggest the names of those she knows would be most suitable, because she is never personally appealed to in confidence, but is merely asked by the nurses themselves to give them letters of recommendation. This is a most invidious position in which to place a Matron, and what a hornets' nest she would let loose about her defenceless ears if she wrote "all truths." One nurse who applied, wept and sulked for days because others here were selected and sent out before her. But our soldiers have, ere this, been blessed with her "devoted services." Surely something can be done to prevent this most undignified scramble to the front, before we are engaged in fighting United Europe.

A SISTER IN A LONDON HOSPITAL.

"FINE LADY NURSES."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR EDITOR,—It may interest you to know what a young officer friend just home wounded from Natal says about the "fine lady nurses." In his graphic way he remarked: "All these untrained females are no good at all; all they did was to sit on the officers' beds and flirt. One ass muddled about for a whole week with my arm, until at last I gave her a good blowing up, and she wouldn't come near me again." I hear these ladies are paying all their own expenses out of the public subscriptions. One said to a friend, "Oh, you'd better come out for the trip; it will do you good and *cost you nothing!*" Did you see the account of Lady ———'s costumes in the *World*? It makes me furious to read such things—naked and ashamed all we British women need to cover us at the present juncture is sackcloth and ashes. As for knitted helmets and *gloves* which are being sent out by the ton—I hear the men only laugh at them, what they want is more tobacco, which is very short. Why on earth, if these fine ladies are so interested in "Tommy," and so anxious for his welfare, don't they confide it to experienced hands, and cease posing as ministering angels in Parisian gowns and headgear. There is quite a little regiment of ladies' maids to the front.

AN OFFICER'S WIFE.

"THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—My husband is an Army Reservist of the Army Service Corps, and is at the present time in Aldershot. He describes the mismanagement at Aldershot as a disgrace. There is neither *sleeping nor messing* accommodation for the troops, and the Cambridge Hospital is left with about three trained nurses. Raw recruits and Militiamen as orderlies. He himself has been ill, and preferred to stay on duty and be treated by a civilian doctor. Knowing that you are always on the side of right and reform, after reading the "Army Nursing Notes" of this week, I could not refrain from writing at once. I would also take the opportunity of saying what a boon the NURSING RECORD is to me in this out-of-the-way place, as I have no doubt it is to many a one similarly situated.

Yours admirably,

A TRAINED NURSE.

[We are quite aware that many more qualified nurses are urgently needed in the military hospitals at home, all the more experienced orderlies having been sent to the front. But the Army Nursing Reserve Committee has proved itself quite incapable of sug-

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