

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.

WOMEN WAR VICTIMS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Letters to the press have voiced the thoughts in the minds of a number of people just now, and it is to be hoped will evoke a clearance of the mystery which seems at the moment to envelop the distribution of the Funds to help Unemployed Women.

To anyone like myself who is interested and affected by the distress on every side, and which is increasing daily, it is incomprehensible that some of the money does not seem to be available to assist a section of the public whose sufferings are, if they were only known, amongst the most acute of any—viz., those of women of good birth and education who, through malign circumstances, have to fight for their very existence. That they are a brave and gallant band I am convinced from personal and intimate knowledge of their lives. This war has swept everything or nearly everything from beneath the feet of a large number of them. Many I know have been unable to get remunerative work since it was declared, and are trying to eke out their hard won savings or tiny incomes not enough to keep body and soul together. Help Committees abound, and all have been appealed to, needless to say, but assistance does not seem to be forthcoming for this portion of the community at all events, as far as my experience goes.

From careful observation and many hours in those places, I have found the members of the Committees most kind and sympathetic with the exception of a few cases; but I invariably came away with the impression that women gently bred who want help don't seem to materialise in the scheme of things just now. A sort of contemptuous kindly tolerance, in fact, just describes the light in which they are regarded.

I have still a most poignant remembrance of an interview at which I was a most unwilling witness, having accompanied a woman in her quest for work, as she rather shrank from going alone, but not to a Help Committee this time, quite another kind of office. We had the ill luck to be attended by a distinctly aggressive young woman. My poor friend was told that she must not be expecting luxuries, &c., and so forth; in fact was as severely lectured as if she had demanded them, yet to my certain knowledge this frail delicate woman had been subsisting for weeks on two meals a day, consisting of bread and tea! I could hardly restrain my feelings and got the poor thing out of the place with all possible speed. Next day I went to see a Secretary whose work for women is being widely advertised, but had to put up with a substitute who informed me that

there was not the slightest chance of the Secretary ever having time to see me; in fact, since the Society had started the only people she had interviewed were the Ladies in Waiting! That speech was my *coup de grace*. Nothing except *Punch* at its best could possibly cope with it, when one considered the true inwardness of the situation.

May I make two suggestions, (1) that well-to-do people should be compelled to share a certain percentage of their incomes with poor relations. It is a shame that men should enjoy every comfort, when their womenkind are in want. And (2) that no well-to-do voluntary workers should be allowed to do work which poor women need in order to live.

Yours truly,
A WAR VICTIM.

THE FRENCH FLAG CORPS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am pleased to observe at last that there is a Corps of Nurses for active service abroad with a standard of training, just alike to the patients, wounded men, who need and deserve our very best skill, and to those nurses who have given years of their best to qualify for a three years' certificate of training. Permit me to congratulate the Committee, whoever they may be, on their determination to maintain a high standard of nursing in those sent to France to help the brave troops of our Allies. It will be an honour for any nurse to belong to this Corps, and I am delighted to observe in this week's BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING that my old training school, Guy's Hospital, is apparently the first to respond to your suggestion that each League should form a unit.

Yours truly,
A MEMBER OF GUY'S HOSPITAL
NURSES' LEAGUE.

[Our suggestion was that each Nurses' League should form a unit and offer for service with the French Flag Nursing Corps, thus securing for the French wounded a *corps d'élite*. The Leagues are apparently too busy to meet at this crisis, but individuals have begun to take action, and by this means some of our most efficient nurses will be elected to this Corps. The credit of organising the Guy's Hospital unit belongs to Miss Gladys White, Sister Surgery, who having herself volunteered, in a few days secured two fellow Sisters, and two Nurses, together with Miss H. L. Colchester as Supervisor, who speaks fluent French. St. Bartholomew's Hospital nurses also provided a unit in a few days.—Ed.]

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

November 21st.—Mention the varieties of vomiting in young infants. What do they usually indicate?

November 28th.—How would you nurse a patient suffering from mental shock?

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