

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.

PRIZE WELL SPENT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Thank you for the cheque. I am sending a formal acknowledgment to the office to-morrow, but I feel I must say once more how pleased I am to have won the prize again. I am spending it this time on the Local Fund to supply Christmas cheer to our Exmouth boys who are fighting for us.

Yours very truly,

DORA VINE.

Eversley, Exmouth.

DOCTORS TO BLAME.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—“Sorry for the Wounded” is right; if only the doctors would refuse to give directions to untrained women, the “emotional” nursing scandal would fizzle out. But, in this district, the doctors teach the Red Cross pupils, and their wives or daughters (absolutely ignorant of nursing) act as Commandants of Red Cross hospitals bossed by their county patients. The whole Red Cross nursing system thus revolves in a vicious circle. It is a cruel shame that wounded men should be at the mercy of such a snobbish autocracy.

Yours truly,

MARION C. PATTEN.

COVERING THE UNQUALIFIED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been “covering the unqualified” in a Red Cross hospital for some weeks; it is a pity the Secretary of State for War cannot be warded in it for a few days, then, perhaps, the War Office would realise what suffering is entailed upon our brave soldiers by the lack of the services of sufficient trained nurses. It is impossible to make the patients really comfortable, or “nurse” those seriously ill. I have asked to be relieved from duty in this hospital, as I cannot conscientiously continue covering up all this muddle, and seeing things go wrong for need of an efficient nursing staff.

Yours truly,

MEMBER R.N.S.

WHY AMATEUR NURSES?

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Why are untrained women allowed to take any part, however minor, in the dressing of our soldiers' wounds, either at home or abroad? The kind of cleanliness required in surgical nursing is not easily grasped, and only those who have had a thorough surgical training really understand it, far less practise it. Every surgeon knows how all-important to his results this

cleanliness is, and how much harm may be done by the conveyance of germs through incompetency on the part of a nurse.

No doubt such a lesson will be learnt from this War that amateur nurses will cease to exist in the future; but why do we English always wait until we have had a lesson? We are intelligent enough to know that a village apprentice dressmaker cannot turn out a Redfern costume, but we are not intelligent enough to understand the dangers our soldiers are exposed to by sending women to nurse them who are not nurses at all.

Yours truly,

A SOLDIER'S WIDOW.

[Why, indeed?—ED.]

TEACHING DISORGANIZED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—As a Sister of a ward chiefly interested in teaching the probationers, may I emphasise a point in connection with the admittance for a few weeks' insight into hospital wards of Red Cross and St. John Ambulance workers? I find that these ladies are as keen as can be about the work, and naturally want to cram in all they can in the short time at their disposal. The result is the regular probationers who have four years in which to learn their work, let them do an undue share and become exceedingly slack. My ward and routine teaching thus get much disorganised.

Yours truly,

A MEMBER NATIONAL COUNCIL TRAINED NURSES.

[This was the reason which primarily prompted the authorities of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, not to take these short term pupils.—ED.]

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

New Probationer.—It is a good plan to keep a Diary all through your training and put down in it each evening any new things you have seen or learnt, any observations you may have made. You will be surprised to find how interesting it becomes.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

December 19th.—When is drainage used and why? (a) Name four methods and material that may be employed?

December 26th.—Define the words (a) sterile; (b) asepsis; (c) disinfectants; (d) sterilization; (e) what is most effective?

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

The Editor hopes that every reader who values THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING will encourage her friends to subscribe for it, so that its constructive work for the profession may receive ever increasing support. Don't forget that it is the only weekly journal edited by a trained nurse, and which supports (1) an efficient standard of Nursing Education, (2) State Registration of Nurses, and (3) Just Economic Conditions for Nurses.

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