

## 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.*

## MOTHERS MUST PUT ASIDE THEIR TEARS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I enclose my subscription to your very useful BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, and thank you for the kind notice on page 228.

There is indeed no comfort for a mother who has lost her dearly loved sons, but if we mothers do not put aside tears and do our duty—at any cost—to put an end to this unholy war, can we expect our sons to do it? Thanking you, and the British nurses for their kind sympathy,

Most sincerely yours,

Roma.

CONSTANCE GARIBALDI.

## A GREAT LOSS TO THE NURSING PROFESSION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have just seen the notice of the nurses' detention. What can I say to express my indignation at this new indignity placed on trained workers. It makes me regret I ever trained and have spent nearly the whole of my working life training nurses. I now feel when engaging Probationers that I am taking advantage of their ignorance of life and industrial conditions. They are quite unaware of the competition they will meet at the end of their training—first the partially trained woman, and now the Red Cross worker (the latter is allowed by the Guardians of this parish to see a little surface nursing for 4 weeks—174 hours). The regular Probationer here has to train for 3 years, have 3 winters' detailed teaching, submit to test examinations, and at end a severe examination by an outside examiner before receiving a certificate of proficiency. The work is most arduous, the hours of duty very long, and many of the few off-duty hours have to be spent in study, writing out lectures, attendance at extra classes, &c., and at the end—what?

I have resigned my office as Matron here as a protest against the introduction of the Red Cross worker in the training school. I cannot help the partially trained woman being in competition, but I do not wish to be made to act as a "blackleg" to my profession by helping to send out the Red Cross worker as a sick nurse.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the brave stand you have always made for the recognition of the work of trained nurses, for the uplifting of the standard of nursing—all resulting in the better nursing and care of the sick and wounded.

I personally owe you a great debt of gratitude.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES E. MARQUARDT.

St. Giles Infirmery,  
Camberwell, S.E.

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF PRIVATE NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to note from time to time that you express the opinion that nurses as a class are by no means avaricious, as I do not wish to give such an impression in the following letter, if you can find space for it.

Now that the Joint War Committee have decreed that £1 rs. a week is to be the price of a trained nurse so far as nursing in military auxiliary hospitals is concerned, and the War Office is to pay less in some institutions, a few remarks from a patriotic private nurse earning from £2 2s. to £3 3s. a week may be permissible, and I speak for quite a number of private nurses whose circumstances I know. Many of us would like to offer our services to our brave soldiers at half our usual fee, but we cannot afford to do so. And why? Because if we did those depending upon us would suffer.

I have been collecting a few reports from private nurse friends, and the following are obligations to which we are pledged:—I pay my parents £1 a week to keep them out of the work-house. This sum pays their rent, rates, washing, coals and light. We have come down in the world, therefore I must deny myself the happiness of nursing the wounded as the Government has decided not to pay the market value for my services. Colleague No. 1 pays for the education of a young brother to fit him to earn an honourable living, she must therefore deny herself patriotic service. Colleague No. 2 has two orphan sisters, she is paying for their clothes and to learn type-writing.

A third has an invalid sister she helps to keep.

A fourth helps an invalid mother; and so on.

Added to which we have to pay heavy premiums to the Royal National Pension Fund to secure a few shillings a week when unable to work.

The Army Medical Service is issuing earnest appeals to trained nurses to staff the new military hospitals, and is flooding the training schools with short-term probationers to help in this emergency; it is announced that the shortage of trained nurses is so acute. But is it? It would be interesting to see what the response would be from the private nurses of the United Kingdom if the War Office offered them a wage which would enable them to fulfil their obligations to their own families. This could be done by paying for their services about one-fourth they offer to quite inexperienced medical men. If the shortage of nurses who are free to accept half-fees is really so great, then our country is quite rich enough to pay a just price for the skilled work of private nurses, when the comfort and recovery of our devoted defenders is at stake. Could you not help to have justice done in this matter?

Yours truly,

A PATRIOTIC PRIVATE NURSE.

[We sympathise greatly with those nurses who long to offer their services to our sick and wounded

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