

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.

REAL RELIEF.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Again I repeat my extreme gratitude for all you and all my unknown kind and good friends have done and are doing for me. Little did I think I should have such real relief. What it has saved me from you cannot tell; for I had begun to think I must give up my room, which is my home. Please believe me when I say the sum you are adding to my weekly 10s., through the generous readers of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, will be most carefully spent.

Again, my sincere thanks,
Yours most gratefully,

F. N.

Sutton Road, Southend.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Will you allow me to thank you most sincerely for the kind interest you have taken in Nurse N., and also for the valuable help you are affording her. I think if those who have so kindly given could see as I do the difference it has made they would be more than rewarded and satisfied. It has relieved the wearing strain of perpetual anxiety and brought with it a peace of mind which is so necessary to a person suffering as Nurse N. has for many years.

Again thanking you for your great kindness,
Believe me,
Yours faithfully,

R. STUART KING.

Rectory, Leigh-on-Sea.

A FEW HOME TRUTHS.

"V.A.D.'s" astounding letter, published on the 27th ult., has elicited shoals of replies, from which we select the few for which we have space this week. There is unanimity of opinion concerning it. The sentiments of the writer are condemned by trained and untrained alike.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Your correspondent, "A V.A.D.," with all her education, fails to realise the fundamental difference between the skilled and the unskilled worker. The former's position results from training and is only reached after careful preparation tested by examination. The latter is available without either. Each serves a useful end, but there can be no comparison between them, nor can they be judged by the same standard, and there should certainly be no room for feelings of jealousy. The unskilled worker can develop into the skilled, given that

enough time, toil and intelligence are brought to the task. No one wants to ignore the work of the V.A.D.'s, and with the powerful, rich Corporation at their back, they will no doubt have little difficulty in obtaining State recognition. Why, however, should any of them desire to be registered as trained nurses? The majority would not contemplate being in attendance on the ordinary sick person after the stress and excitement of the war are past. It surprises me that they can wish to come in under the aegis of the trained nurse who has been less generously treated by the State than any other class of skilled worker.

"A V.A.D." evidently generalises from the particular and cannot have come into contact with nurses such as those with whom I trained.

I wish she had not used the words "snobbish and insolent." I am so tempted to use them!

Yours faithfully,

ELLEN B. KINGSFORD.

Fallow Corner Home for Homeless Children,
North Finchley, N.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It was good of you to print that letter from a V.A.D. last week, for I believe her point of view is that of a great number of V.A.D.'s, though the vision of probably few of them is quite so distorted as that of your correspondent.

I have had V.A.D. probationers for the past year and my personal experience of them has, on the whole, been favourable, i.e., I have found them in point of intelligence, education, and gentleness just about equal with the average trained nurse—in executive ability, very much behind, but that is no doubt due partly to inexperience, and partly to lack of incentive, having no goal of a certificate at which to aim.

Some of my confrères have not been so fortunate and have had difficulty in keeping their V.A.D.'s from being unduly familiar with the patients, thus destroying discipline in the wards. This is most marked in Auxiliary Hospitals, which are principally staffed by V.A.D.'s, and where there is much less of the restraining good sense and guidance of trained women.

I think it may almost go without saying that the skilful management of a large number of men of all sorts and conditions, is much more easily attained by a woman of tact and of long experience, rather than by one whose principal claims are youth, good looks, money, and the doubtful advantage of belonging to the "governing" class.

Again, any physician or surgeon, certainly any of those who "count," prefers a capable, experienced, intelligent person to carry out his wishes, rather than a novice, no matter how young, pretty, rich, and "insolent" she may be.

Surely your correspondent is very young or very superficial, if she has not yet realised that manners, education and even culture are by no

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