

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.

MAKESHIFTS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I must apologise for delay in replying to your correspondent in the issue of November 2nd, but in my present sphere of work we are so busy celebrating Italian victories and peace that English posts and papers reach us very rarely, and after long delays! I hope, however, that as she belongs to the half of the world with its summer before it, my information may still be useful. The highly-developed optical organ of the common fly and of some other insects is blind to the blue rays of the spectrum. I will not be so foolhardy as to try to explain why this is so. The exact tint of blue does not matter, but what is generally employed is the full "royal blue," of the shade used for old-fashioned glass salt-cellars. (The most hygienic spittoons are made of this glass, to prevent the dissemination of their infectious contents by visiting flies.) If one has quite a free hand in doing up a sick room or hospital ward for the fly season, the best plan is to colourwash the walls and ceiling of as rich a blue as possible; ordinary dry paint, mixed with the whitewash; this makes a most restful "ambiente," as we say in this country. Then drape or cover your windows with net or muslin, dyed blue. This is easily managed with Dolly dyes or their equivalent; it is actually sufficient if you veil the upper part of the window, particularly if it is of the sort that comes down to the ground. If the windows are half shut, colourwash them also; but, as the plague of flies is usually with us in hot weather I am supposing that all the air possible is to be allowed to enter the room or tent, for the colour scheme is of course equally practicable with the latter. If the floor can share in the prevailing tint so much the better, as the wandering fly will then see what appears to him to be a pitch-dark cavern and so will turn his attention elsewhere.

I am, yours faithfully,

THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.

Montecchio Maggiore,

Forces Françaises en Italie.

THE MISCHIEF OF MEDDLING.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—In your issue of November 2nd, I note that you say that in speaking "of the charity," namely, the Nation's Fund for Nurses, in Manchester, I drew attention to the "comparatively few" trained nurses at the front. This is not so. What I said was that had the V.A.D.s been more efficiently trained, the strain would have been considerably less for the trained nurses, and that I strongly advised any V.A.D. who thought of taking up nursing as a profession

to go in for regular and efficient training, in addition to the experience gained during the war. I would also like to point out that I particularly emphasised that the College of Nursing and the Tribute Fund attached to it was in no way a charity, but a tribute due to those nurses who had done such splendid work. I know nothing whatever of a "V.A.D. Register," and in speaking of the proposed College for Nurses I have regarded it as the highest tribute to a profession for women which I honour beyond any other.

I would be glad if you would kindly correct the misstatement in your next issue.

Believe me, yours faithfully,

N. MARTIN HARVEY.

New Theatre, Cardiff.

[We made no "misstatement" in our report of Mrs. Martin Harvey's speech at Manchester, in our issue of November 2nd. Our correspondent's account concerning the "comparatively few" trained nurses at the front, to which she alluded, in eulogising V.A.D.s, also appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of October 18th, and so far has not been contradicted, and Mrs. Harvey's statement "that the establishment of the College would prevent anything of the kind in the future," also appears in that leading paper.

Mrs. Martin Harvey writes: "I should like to point out that I particularly emphasised that the College of Nursing and the Tribute Fund attached to it was in no way a charity." We have before us the registration certificate by the London County Council under the War Charities Act 1916, of "The Nation's Fund for Nurses," established 2nd July, 1917, the objects of which are defined "To provide Endowment and Benevolent Funds for the College of Nursing, Ltd." One is prompted to ask Mrs. Martin Harvey why she attends meetings of nurses, and particularly emphasises an untrue and misleading statement calculated to allay the objections of many nurses who may be present to the begging of alms upon their behalf. If Mrs. Martin Harvey has not taken the trouble to acquaint herself with the facts as to the constitution of the College of Nursing and its "charity" fund, we consider it quite inexcusable of her to interfere with the professional and economic affairs of trained nurses, and in so doing mislead the unwary. We nurses who object to all this noisy chatter concerning our work by persons who know nothing about it, cannot be blamed for protesting against the disastrous results of it.

How would Mrs. Martin Harvey and her fair colleagues of the dramatic profession like a band of trained nurses to form themselves into a Committee and stomp the country advocating their eleemosynary control by a Council of Actor-Managers authorised by Act of Parliament? If we know anything of these spirited women, they would soon expose the danger and absurdity of such a situation. Then, why should actresses and society women hold our honourable profession up to public com-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)