

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.

SHORT CUTS TO THE NURSING PROFESSION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—The following paragraph appeared recently in the *Scotsman* in an article on "The Women's Outlook." It is so significant of the determination of V.A.D.s to "butt in" without training that it should be read as a warning by earnest young women, willing to be thoroughly trained in hope of earning a living by nursing:—

THE NEED FOR NURSES.

Just as there will be little excuse for unemployment, if adequate organisation is set in motion, so there will be little need to let hard-won experience fall into disuse. Many V.A.D.s are wondering what will become of them when the broken men they have tended through four years of war have become fit and gone out into the world again. There is always, of course, a demand for nurses. They will be needed for a long time to come in increasing numbers, and many V.A.D.s will take up nursing as their profession. The great objection to this, of course, is the long period of training. Most hospitals, being charitable institutions, have to be run as cheaply as possible; and the nurses start their training by doing work which ought to be done by domestic servants. Their actual nursing experience comes only at the end of their training period. A much shorter training period would be necessary if nurses were only required to do nursing. Another opportunity for women who have been connected with hospitals, and who object to this additional three or four years' training, is in social service. Mrs. Leslie Mackenzie, whose child welfare work is known throughout Scotland, said to a *Scotsman* representative that a V.A.D., after a short training of perhaps six months in a hospital or the medical department of a poorhouse, where she would be working among sick children, and after taking the social service course at the University, would prove a thoroughly competent child welfare nurse. When child welfare work develops, as it is doing rapidly at present, there will be great scope for women in this all-important branch of social service.

A thoroughly competent "welfare nurse" can be no other than a thoroughly trained nurse, and it will be a scandal if this highly important national work is to be given to V.A.D.s with six months' experience.

Yours faithfully,
SCOTTISH WELFARE SUPERINTENDENT.

[We are watching this movement of short cuts to the Nursing Profession. How about "the goose that lays the golden egg"? Where are the four years' trainees to come from, if outside work is gobbled up by quick-change artists? It is time hospital authorities realised this important little point. Short service for V.A.D.s means short service for the general probationer—that is a certainty.—ED.]

STATISTICS REQUIRED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have recently heard a theory that the infants belonging to men who have been vaccinated the year before their birth often do not "take" when they are vaccinated in their turn.

I should be glad to learn if this theory has any reliable foundation.

Yours faithfully,
AN ENQUIRER.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Miss I. E. Henderson writes:—"I have been much interested in the account given in this week's Journal, also in that of December 21st, of the opening of the Scottish Nurses' Club in Glasgow. I am sure old "Royal" Nurses like myself will prize the picture of Mrs. Strong which appeared. I wonder if I can have more copies to send to friends at a distance? . . . I enclose £1 as a small contribution towards our State Registration Fund."

Miss Mary Harvey writes:—"I enclose 8s. 7d. my penny in the pound for 1918, for State Registration expenses. Please accept my best wishes for the New Year and sincerest thanks for all you are doing to lift up our profession."

Sister Q.A.I.M.N.S.R.:—"I note that trained Matrons and Assistant Matrons in Military work are still being awarded 2nd Class Red Crosses along with the V.A.D.s. One wonders they have not the self-respect to refuse these "honours."

Anti-Patronage writes "I note that Lord Cowdray, the millionaire, has given £100,000 for the establishment and endowment of a Royal Flying Corps Club, and that he and Lady Cowdray have put down £10,000 for the Elsie Inglis Memorial. No begging and side-shows for these Funds, just dignified gifts, as they should be, from those who owe their immense wealth to commercial enterprise. But how different when dealing with the 'Nation's Noblest Women,' for whom 'widows' mites' and gifts to sell over the counter. 'Victory' kick-ups and other obnoxious methods are all the time in full swing, for which humiliation there is absolutely no excuse, as these people will know how self-respecting workers detest being so degraded. I for one have written our good King and Queen on the matter, and I advise others to do likewise—they have a right to know how we feel about it."

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

QUESTIONS.

January 18th.—State what you know of intravenous infusions and transfusions, their purpose, the blood substitutes utilised, and the manner of their application, and the dangers to be guarded against.

January 25th.—What premonitory symptoms would cause you to suspect the onset of eclampsia? What features does this disease present, and how would you deal with a case pending the arrival of a doctor?

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