

Yet another war product—the “chauffeur-nurse”—has arrived, and, according to a correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, likes her position amazingly. She had driven an ambulance during the war, and states: “I took my home-nursing and first-aid course like every woman in '14, and it occurred to me that a busy country doctor might find it useful to be able to count on a woman chauffeur for help in emergencies.” So she really did have a few months’ (or was it weeks?) insight into first-aid work before reaching her objective, “the front,” and now considers herself able to be useful to a busy country doctor “in case of accidents, or in sudden calls to illness,” and is of opinion that, “in a simple operation, or emergency, almost any doctor would be grateful for an ex-V.A.D., always supposing, of course, that a trained nurse was not on the spot.”

Several points are worthy of consideration in this connection. Firstly, so long as there is a discharged soldier out of a job, capable of acting as a chauffeur, no “ex-V.A.D.” has a right to absorb it. Secondly, if the ex-V.A.D. is in the doctor’s car, it is extremely unlikely that a trained nurse will be on the spot; therefore her work will be absorbed, too. Thirdly, what about the hands of the chauffeur-nurse? How does she prepare and disinfect them when she helps with cases of accidents and “simple” operations? What is a simple operation, by the way? It might easily, we opine, be resolved into a complex one with the assistance of a V.A.D. who has not the aseptic habit.

We trust that the “busy country doctor” (“my doctor is the only medical man in the district”) will keep his chauffeur to her job, and if she absorbs the work of the skilled mechanic, that at least he will not permit her to meddle with human lives.

Nurses who desire to spend their days off out of London may be glad to know that Miss Wood, R.R.C., M.R.B.N.A., 26 and 27, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent, receives nurses for the day or night off. Lunch, tea, dinner cost 7s. 5d., fare from London 7s. 7½d. return, so that the inclusive cost to them is 15s. Board-residence costs from 27s. to 30s. per week or 10s. for 24 hours, four meals inclusive. Breakfast is served in the bedroom, tennis and boating are obtainable, and fields and woods are quite near. Tonbridge is about

thirty miles from London, and Kent, as is well known, is a lovely county.

We are informed that so far no steps have been taken by the Bermondsey Board of Guardians to protect the sick from the group of nurses who were condemned and fined in a Court of Law for ragging and bullying their colleague, Nurse Emily Russell. We had hoped the Guardians would have realised how totally unsuitable such women are to be entrusted with the care of poor, defenceless patients. Anyway, now we have a Ministry of Health, it is to be hoped such Boards of so-called Guardians of the Poor will soon be superseded by more humane people.

Presiding at the annual meeting of the Birmingham District Nursing Society, held recently at the Council House, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Sir David Brooks) paid tribute to the efficient help the Society’s nurses rendered to the Health Committee during the influenza epidemic last year. He also expressed the hope that the society would be set on a stable financial footing. It had been struggling, he said, under a gradually accumulating deficit, and had it not been for the special effort made on Flag Day, by which £2,676 was raised, the society would have found itself in a position of difficulty. Excellent as the Flag Day result was, it only afforded temporary relief from embarrassment, and did not solve the problem with which they were faced. Their expenditure annually exceeded their income by £1,000, and what they required to alter that state of things were more regular subscribers.

Mr. W. A. Cadbury also praised the society’s work during the influenza epidemic. In future, he added, there was going to be a higher standard of nursing, and there was also to be an inquiry into remuneration and hours. The result would probably be to throw a greater burden on the city, and the Health Committee would no doubt have to look again to the Nursing Society for help.

The Joint Conciliation Committee award in connection with the pay of asylum workers lays down that the wage to be paid to a male nurse in a rural asylum shall not be less than the minimum standard wages of farm labourers, as fixed from time to time by the Agricultural Wages Board.

In urban districts wages are fixed at £2 a week for male nurses.

The wages of female nurses are scheduled at 20 per cent. below the rates of the men.

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