

A VISIT FROM ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD EVANS.

On Friday, September 11th, Admiral Sir Edward Evans, London's well-known Regional Commissioner, paid a visit of inspection to Battersea's First Aid Posts.

Battersea General Hospital was included in his tour, and although on that particular day there was a shortage of patients (for a nice change), still he came for the benefit of the few we had. And also, of course, to see the staff. We at Battersea have a very warm corner in our hearts for this gallant and true Englishman; we have followed with breathless interest some of the most wonderful adventures of his unique career.

But when he arrived, it was not with the bustle and importance of a distinguished and famous visitor; he arrived quietly and modestly, and asked simply if he might see the patients.

He spoke to each one and delighted them. The men particularly were thrilled and astonished at the rows of ribbons on his breast! To one of our kitchen helpers—one who has not missed her duties for one single day in the whole of the blitz, nor since—he had a special word of congratulation, and she was as excited as a young girl about it. "Isn't he just perfect—just like a brother," she said tremulously.

Before he departed he left a gift of money for "something for the nurses." What a man! "The Navy was here," and for one thrilling half-hour we had the privilege and honour of showing the Navy a wee bit of land that the Navy is proud to protect.—G. M. H.

CROYDON GENERAL HOSPITAL.

Annual Reunion.

The Annual Reunion will be held on Saturday, October 17th, 1942, from 3-6 p.m.

St. Luke's Day Service in the Chapel at 3.30 p.m., the Bishop of Croydon (Rt. Revd. M. H. Harland, M.A.), officiating.

All past members of the staff are cordially invited, R.S.V.P. to the Matron.

WHAT TO READ.

MEMOIRS AND BIOGRAPHY.

"The Unrelenting Struggle." Second Volume of Winston Churchill's War Speeches.

"Octavia Hill." E. Moberly Bell.

"My Naval Life." Earl of Cork and Orrery.

"Arab Command." Major C. S. Jarvis.

"The Fire of Life." 46 Years' Service in All Parts of the World. General Sir George de S. Barrow.

FICTION.

"Thankless Child." Frank Swinnerton.

"The Open Heart." Susanna Mitchell.

"Lonely Parade." Fannie Hurst.

"Kitty Villiers." Lewis Gibbs.

"A New Way of Life." Robert Hichens.

MISCELLANEOUS.

"Meet the South Americans." Carl Crow.

"Empire Days." Paul H. Emden.

"Russia in War." Feliks Topolski.

"Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865." Margaret Leech.

"Flight to Arras." A. de Saint Exupéry.

"The Bond Between Us." Dr. Frederic Loomis.

"We Lived in London." T. Marsh.

"A Narrow Street." Elliot Paul.

"Munich Playground." Ernest Pope.

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.

THE STATUS OF V.A.D.s.

September 20th, 1942.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with interest your article, *re* V.A.D.s and their desire to become part of the Nursing Profession, and endorse same, but they are not altogether to blame. In the very early days of this war, they were never given a status. At the hospital where I worked, as the Sergeant-in-charge of the Operating Theatres, I found practically no trained staff. The Sisters (Q.A.I.M.N.S. and (R)), and myself, plus one or two Male Nurses, were the only trained staff, the R.A.M.C. personnel also having gone to France. These V.A.D.s, all filled with the desire to be of use, soon took possession, and not even the Matron had full control of them, they being entirely under their own Commandant. The old problem, "A little knowledge, etc.", soon became evident; they were petted and made a fuss of, and it soon got to their heads. Even we senior N.C.O.s had no jurisdiction over them, which made it very difficult for discipline, and one constantly got bother between the Nursing Orderlies and the V.A.D.s, the latter not being prepared to attend to the minor duties of bed pans, bottles, etc. On the other hand the R.A.M.C. personnel objected to always being relegated to General duty work. There was practically no one to supervise them and they certainly lived in their own world. The Sisters had all they could manage to run their wards and personally supervise everything. Now, of latter time, with the introduction of the Grade I badge, which allows V.A.D.s to travel 1st class on a Warrant, they are given every chance of competing with the General Trained Staff, and have assumed the fictitious title of Junior Officers, whereas their proper position is Other Ranks. Even their own N.C.O.s are nobody; by this I mean a Sergeant Dispenser who is an M.P.S. has to travel 3rd class with the Rank and File, because they are not Grade I members. No, it is all wrong, and if by your efforts you are successful in putting these people in their proper position you will have done a grand job of work. There is no doubt about it, the V.A.D.s have got the wind up because they know the A.T.S. are a disciplined body and being run on proper lines in rank, etc., and to rules. There is no reason why these people should not go into the A.T.S. and wear the R.A.M.C. badge, in fact it would do them good and cut down their airs and graces.

Your second article relating to the Q.A.I.M.N.S. and Commissions, I do not quite agree, because in these days of uniforms, and the various women organisations, it would not be fair to the General Trained Nurse to be in uniform without position, and I regret that they were not given the three up as Captains. Even in the last war Sisters were always treated as Officers by us in the Forces, although they never wore pips, but you will surely agree there was no necessity for the pips because they were practically the only serving body in uniform, and I submit it is a different position to-day.

I hope the above will prove of interest, and to state my qualifications, I am a 1st class Nurse, R.A.M.C., and an Operating Room Assistant, having been a Sgt. Instructor of O.R.A.s for a number of years.—Yours truly,

E. MUSSELBROOK.

"THE NURSING AID."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING,

DEAR EDITOR,—“The Nursing Aid” is the euphonious title which distinguishes the semi-trained from the qualified

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