

LETTERS FROM READERS

True American Soldiers

The following paragraphs are from a letter sent to the editor of *Star and Scripps*, after it had published Lieutenant Francis Shlager's editorial. (See the January *Journal*, page 1.) It is published here through the courtesy of *Star and Scripps* and Colonel Florence A. Burnhilleth, ANC.

What a grand group of women comprise the ANC. . . . At a time when duty in civilian life would bring the highest financial remuneration (they) chose to give up all the comforts of home and of the modern hospitals to give their services to the men of the armed forces. . . . [They] ask for no favors, want no special consideration, but rather face dangers to help some wounded man on his way to recovery. I have had occasion to see many of the Army nurses in the ETO and they were always happiest when they were very busy because then they were really being useful.

Men, we owe these nurses the highest debt of appreciation and the utmost respect. They are really, just women, like your sister, but they have proved beyond doubt that they have the "guts" of the best soldier.

All the peace, honor, and respect we can shower on the ANC cannot begin to compare to the glory each of them earns each day as a true American soldier.—CHRISTIE S. WIGNOT, 1st, First Lieutenant, 590 Eng. C. Inf., Adjutant.

Order Your Journal Index Now

I have always used the *Journal Index*—hurryingly, unthinkingly, successfully—but in the last ten days *intensely*, searching for every reference to that elusive creature known under at least ten names—the practical nurse. To be sure, the *Journal's Index* title for her has changed with the times, but the sector is led gently to one general point of reference each year. What a relief—what a joy! Please bless all those who decide these delicate issues. The contrast to less well constructed indices is immense, as I am learning every day.

I suppose that sometimes the wealth of detail and cross reference may seem sparse and paper-consuming, but what an aid to quick knowledge! The *Journal Index* is the best I have seen and the simplest to use. After days of delving, I can speak with assurance and knowledge, just try checking in some of our textbooks or other journals where you find yourself without guide, compass, charts, or radio beam, lost in an impenetrable forest of words.

I like your *Index* so much that I had to write and say so.—D. D. R.N., New York.

[Something new in this area has been added to the 1944 *Journal*—the entry "vocational nurse," one of the new terminology being used to designate the erstwhile practical nurse. Each subscriber is entitled to a copy of the *Index*, on request.—THE EDITORS.]

The Bordeaux School Critics On

After more than four years of silence, I hope at last to renew contact with you. Our school, a memorial to American nurses, was taken over by the enemy in January 1941. You would have trouble in recognizing it, but luckily the building remained. Nothing is left of the hall of the school nor of the dining room. All the ground floor has been sacked. All the partitions for the individual students' rooms have been taken away, the cupboards, et cetera. Only the garden remains beautiful.

Your memorial is weakened and disorganized, but living. Two weeks after the departure of the enemy, requests for admission to the school began to come in to us again. The director of Bordeaux implied us to open the hospital—which was pilaged and partially destroyed—for the good of the community, but our nurses are scattered throughout France.

For a long time we have had nothing to justify our students in. We use 40 sheets to make dresses and aprons, and these are limited to six or seven per student. We have no more teeth or stockings. Our shoes have wooden soles, or we wear straw sandals.

All this is little, I know, in comparison to the sacrifices necessary for the victory in which we have always believed. Afternoons' greetings from the Marianne Nightingale School, Bordeaux, France.—MARCELAIRIE COMSIN, A.O.N., Director.

Sharing to the Best of Their Ability

It isn't easy for a grandmother who is forced to her home to get up and, in a completely different atmosphere, find herself by 6:30 A.M. a soldier figure hastening along a bleak corridor to ward duty. You think, "I don't have to do it." But once on duty, there comes a sense of belonging and pride in being able to help in this very important part of the home front. You are finding some younger nurse's job for her while she, on the front lines, is giving skilled nursing service to wounded fighting men, and you are helping assure those men that their home folks will have adequate hospital care.

Professional nursing demands life-long learning. When a doctor "springs" something new to you, like pyelotomy deficiency, you learn not to get punky, unable, but to turn to a textbook. Or, if the treatment ordered is unfamiliar, you consult the ward book and you learn something more.

The knowledge, efficiency, and courtesy of today's younger graduates and the vastness of opportunities open to them is an inspiration to an older nurse. My recent brief experience in psychiatry convinces me that the nursing profession will take an important part in this phase of postwar work.

I said to my son before he left for the South Pacific, "Something great is happening in our world. It were better never to have been born than to be alive today and not share, to the best of one's ability, in this hour of humanity's travail."—MATTHEW DAVIS, R.N., California.

I am seventy-two years old but am working eight hours a day at our County Hospital. Some day I want to write about my thirty-six years of nursing experience.—MARGARET BYRNE, R.N., California.

I always enjoyed the *Journal*, while living and working in the USA but now, trying to work in the mud of France, we look forward to receiving it more than ever. Through it many others besides myself maintain a certain contact with nursing in our own US.

In our tent hospital, a very new experience for all of us, the end results of our ingenuity and resourcefulness are amazing. We have concrete foundations and electricity in the ward tents, candles and kerosene lamps for our quarters. Best wishes to all.—LUCRETIA LONA W. YATES, ANC.

The Nurse Draft

A draft of nurses would be a "class draft," unfair and not the "American way." If all men can be drafted and taught to kill, surely all women can be drafted and taught to nurse.—R.N., New York.

If nurses were drafted, we would be neither disgraced nor imposed upon. Our fighting men are not disgraced by being drafted. We are proud to be classified with them as essential and ready to do a job that can be done by no other group.—R.N., Illinois.

Please Sign Your Letters

Unsigned letters cannot be published. Your name will be withheld if you wish.—THE EDITORS.