

THE VICTORIAN ORDER OF HOME HELPERS.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

SIR,—I very much fear that a layman's criticism of any article in your journal, which I read from month to month with interest, will be regarded as savoring of presumption if not of impertinence. Nevertheless I make bold to offer for your editorial consideration, and for publication if you can see your way thereto, a few remarks upon the article on the Victorian Order of Home Helpers which appears in the issue for May. I am the more willing to venture upon this uninvited communication because I feel that your editorial was written under a misapprehension of facts similar to that under which I myself labored until a few weeks ago; and that, with more light, you may see your way to give the weight of your great influence to the movement, which at present does not command your admiration.

1. The first misapprehension under which you rest is the exceedingly common one that the scheme must fail unless the sum of one million dollars is raised. This is not so. Even if only one hundred thousand dollars were secured, and much more than that will surely be obtained, the good work may be begun, which in the old land has proved so manifest a blessing. Of course the larger the contribution the greater the possible efficiency; but a more modest form of operation is still possible should the desired financial goal be unreachd in the jubilee year.

2. You are also mistaken in supposing that imperfectly trained nurses are to be employed. None but those who have received a full course, and whose efficiency is certified by competent authority, will be engaged. This was not the first intention, but careful consideration soon compelled the promoters of this movement to see that it could not command the approval of thoughtful men and women if "half-trained helpers," as you call them, were permitted to drive out of employment those who had been duly qualified for the important work of nursing.

3. My experience as pastor of a large congregation in this city compels me to join issue with you on a point of fact. You claim that the cities do not need the help which it is proposed to give through the establishment of the Victorian Order. You doubtless know the needs of your own city; but speaking for Montreal, where three hospitals are yearly graduating accomplished nurses, most of whom remain with us, I can testify that during the past season even those who could pay for the nurses were not always able to