

ARMY SERVICE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—There is a feeling in the Army, and I believe it is widespread, that the time has come when men who have now been serving over two and a half years should be allowed to wear some mark of their service. Before the corresponding period of the last war chevrons had been introduced to mark service oversea, and in the fourth year the ribbon of the Mons Star was awarded to the surviving veterans of 1914. In this war Germany has issued certificates, signed by Hitler, to men who took part in the occupations of Austria and Czechoslovakia and the campaign against Poland. These have been found among the treasured possessions of dead or captured German soldiers. All experience proves the value to moral of decorations and distinctions; other nations have used them more freely and perhaps with greater effect than we have.

In this war it is clear that a chevron of a different colour should be given for home service, and just as much to civil defence workers as to those in the armed Forces. The oversea chevron may often represent more experience of battle, but the chevron given to men of the A.A., coast defence, and the balloon barrage may represent more boredom, loneliness, and patient vigilance. Perhaps the civil defence workers of our blasted towns have the fullest experience of both, two winters of wearisome waiting and one of strenuous and dangerous action.

It will hardly be suggested that all recognition should be postponed until victory has been won. At a time when we hope the offensive phase of the war is about to begin, recognition seems due to those who successfully stayed off defeat during the days of our greatest weakness.

Yours faithfully,

HUGH MOLSON,

House of Commons, April 14.