

Staff Corps. This idea originated, says the *Queen*, with Miss ETHEL STOKES, who has been instrumental in forming a small Executive Committee and in drawing up a set of rules to be observed. The duties of the corps, if formed, would be to assist the existing regular and volunteer corps in providing medical attendance and assistance in time of war, and on public ceremonial occasions. The synopsis of work included medical training, based on the manual for the Medical Staff Corps, a course of musketry exercise, and company and squad drill; theoretical work to be supplemented by practical experience in Military Hospitals, and tactical exercise in encamping. Lieut.-Col. EVATT, at the invitation of the Committee, gave, at the inaugural meeting, a lecture on the duties of a Medical Staff Corps in war. He drew graphic plans of the battlefield, with the various forms of Hospitals and Aids to the Injured; briefly sketching the life of a soldier from the moment the enemy's shell wounds him till he is safely landed on English shores. The lecturer frequently insisted on the necessity for the employment of only the very strongest of men in field Nursing, and on the many hardships and almost insurmountable difficulties of the work. He approved of the presence of the Sisters at base Hospitals—namely, those established at the entrance to an enemy's territory—and he alluded to the entry of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE into the ill-fated Hospital at Scutari; only he regarded this event as typical of England's interest in her martial sons. At the conclusion of the lecture most of the audience felt that woman's sphere lay nearer home than on the eastern battlefields. Col. EVATT in no way attempted to discourage the promoters of a woman's corps; on the contrary, he rated women's services in sickness at their very highest; he opined that the training contemplated could only be beneficial, but he firmly showed that, in his opinion, questions of more than physical interest were involved, and as a man experienced in the horrors and terrors of war, he wished to exclude the members of the gentler sex from participating in them. Some discussion followed, several members of the Medical Staff Corps taking part in it. Mrs. K. E. HEATHERLEY, who presided, spoke greatly in favour of the movement, and saw no objection, either physical or moral, to the scheme.

WE may here remark that some six years ago we prepared, by a special request, a scheme (which, we imagine, has been pigeon-holed from that day to this in an important Government Office) for a Volunteer Corps of Nurses, to be ready to act as a Nursing reserve in times of war or pestilence. But, of course, the essential basis of our scheme was that the Corps should be composed of thoroughly-trained Nurses. We, therefore, print with pleasure the letter sent by Miss HENRIETTA KENEALY,

Registered Nurse, M.R.B.N.A., to the *Standard* upon the question, with which we entirely agree:—

"SIR,—As a Nurse of some standing and long service, I am naturally interested in any movement connected with nursing the sick; but I ought not to withhold my protest against the proposed project of forming 'a corps of Lady Volunteers, whose special duty is to tend the sick and wounded in war,' an account of which was reported in the *Standard* of the 12th inst. The scheme, so far as it is disclosed, appears to me to be mischievous and uncalled for, and Colonel Evatt, of the Army Medical Department, Woolwich, seems to hold a similar conviction. In his address he clearly pointed out the obstacles presenting themselves, and in answer to questions he distinctly told the assembled candidates that in time of war there was no difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of trained Nurses. To quote his own words: 'On the last occasion fifteen hundred ladies offered to go to Egypt. They have the pick of all the London Hospitals for their purpose, and, so far from there being a dearth of Nurses, they always had more offers than they could deal with.' Yet, in spite of this strong expression of opinion, many ladies gave in their names as members of the new corps.

I do not quite grasp the plan of action the Lady Volunteers lay down for themselves, but if they are in earnest, and seek to do good work in the world, I for one wish them God speed in their new enterprise; but if these ladies are to include nursing the wounded and sick in their plan of operations, they must needs, if they do not wish to be regarded as impostors, go through the legitimate and required training to fit them for their work. Nursing is not a military art, nor will musket practice and drill help a woman to heal the sick. I cannot myself imagine any circumstances in which the War Office would be likely to send to the seat of war such raw recruits to nurse our wounded soldiers, in preference to the trained veterans who, by long years of skilled work, have fitted themselves for this branch of the profession.

In spite of the still prevalent notion that any woman can nurse the sick, we in the profession know there is no royal road to the art and craft of Nursing. A woman who is in earnest and loves her work will cheerfully go through the drudgery of apprenticeship in order to acquire perfection in her calling, and it would be a grievous thing if the public, dazzled by the glamour that attaches to all military manoeuvres, were to regard as trained and qualified Nurses such Lady Volunteers as it is proposed to institute.

Already is the Nursing world thronged with so-called Nurses—women who have very little claim to the title beyond that conferred by wearing a Nurse's uniform; and in all parts of the country these untrained women are engaged by the too credulous public in nursing the sick in private houses; and not only do such as these nurse the helpless sick, but they venture further afield, and are engaged by Technical Instruction Committees and other educational bodies to deliver lectures on Sick Nursing, First Aid to the Injured, and kindred subjects, dangerous in the hands of any but experts.

Knowing these facts, as I do, by intimate experience, I feel justified in protesting against the national work of nursing our soldiers wounded in war being given over, even in imagination, to a body of ladies whose best efforts could be but amateur as well as volunteer.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL BRITISH  
NURSES' ASSOCIATION  
(H. M. KENEALY)."

March 13.

WE quote the following excellent article, entitled "Private Nurses," from our valuable and influential contemporary the *Medical Times and Hospital Gazette*:—

"There are many difficulties connected with the employment of Nurses of which medical men have frequent personal experience, and it is certain that with the increasing extent to

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