

army reserve has been organised in order to raise the strength of regiments to a greater standard in war-times than during the continuance of peace, and it is suggested that it would be wise that the Nurses who are thus enrolled, should, from time to time, receive instruction, theoretically and practically, in the duties which they would be called upon to fulfil, were their services actually needed.

It is wisely proposed that the Hospitals should take an active part in the execution of this scheme, and we cannot doubt that the majority of them, at any rate, will be willing to perform a duty which might become of the greatest importance to the State. So far as the Nurses are concerned, we have no doubt as to the nature of their response. They have always shown themselves eager to come forward when an emergency has actually arisen, and we feel confident that they will be by no means backward in offering their services, in order that they may be so trained for this special work that those services should be more efficiently rendered if the need arose.

There are certain practical details, moreover, as to mobilization and outfit, which can be with much benefit decided upon by an organization such as the Royal British Nurses' Association rather than by any particular Hospital. So far as we understand the scheme, it is proposed that, at first, at any rate, it shall be the work of an unofficial and semi-private organisation, and that the War Office shall not be asked to give its sanction and Governmental support to the scheme, until it has been conclusively proved, by experience, that such a reserve of Nurses can be formed and efficiently maintained. This is the method which has been adopted by most of the successful undertakings of this country, and seems to be in accordance with the spirit of the people—to organise a new scheme successfully; to find out, by actual practical experience, the strength and weakness, the failure or the capability of success which it contains; and then, and not until then, to seek for State approval and sanction to the work. Red tape is an excellent material in its way; but, in the growth and development of new concerns, it is apt to be somewhat injurious by its constricting tendency. It is also a good general rule, in business as well as in human development, that the greatest freedom and the less interference with natural growth which is possible, the more successful will be the results obtained. It is for such reasons as these that we believe the Nursing Reserve is well advised to commence its work in a tentative manner, and to prove its capacity and justify its existence, before it seeks for Governmental assistance and control.

WITHOUT KITCHEN FIRE.—Hot Water instantly night or day. Boiling Water in a minute. Warm Bath when wanted. Ewart's "Lighting Geysers" Factory, 346-350, Euston Road. Immense stock of Plunge Baths on view in new Show Rooms. When gas is not laid on the "Geysers" may now be successfully worked with petroleum.

NURSES' HOLIDAYS.

The question of Nurses' holidays is once more arousing attention at several Hospitals. In view of the continuous nature of their work and of the great demand which it makes upon their health and strength, it is beyond dispute that Nurses require longer holidays and more frequent intervals of rest than are needed by most other workers in the community. This fact has been sufficiently recognised to cause the Committee of many Hospitals to be liberal in the opportunities for recreation which they give to the members of their Nursing staff. But there remain some Institutions still at which the importance of this matter has not received the attention which it deserves, and it is to those that we would especially address our argument, not only for the Nurses' sake, but for the welfare of the patients upon whom they are expected to attend. It is plain that a Nurse must possess physical health and strength if she is to perform her duties efficiently. The Select Committee of the House of Lords, whose investigation of Metropolitan Hospitals led them to make such valuable recommendations on Nursing matters, expressed the opinion that "the period of holidays should not be less than three weeks," and they summarized the length of holidays allowed during the year at Hospitals as generally varying from a fortnight to a month. Since this important expression of opinion, coinciding as it does with that upon which all humane Committees act, we are glad to observe, in the case of a large number of metropolitan and provincial Hospitals that a considerable extension of the periods of rest formerly permitted to the Nurses has been provided for. And this, not only in the matter of the annual holiday, but also in the increase of off duty times during the day or month. We might almost say that at most Hospitals now the Nurses and Probationers are allowed three weeks clear holidays each year—a period which is by no means excessive. It is to be hoped that the few Institutions which in this, as in other matters, are behind the times, and still pursue antiquated methods, will at least be aroused to the justice of giving sufficient rest to the women who have to work so hard.

PECULIAR PEOPLE.

The advice which a modern satirist puts into the mouth of a worldly woman as bestowed upon her daughters, that "if they cannot be pretty, they must be peculiar," is one which is evidently taken to heart by the advanced female of the present day. The Knickerbocker Knights have now designed and caused to be engraved the costume in which they desire to appear in public. A humorous contemporary has been even cruel enough to publish this illustration, and from the perky straw hat perched on the side of the head down to the casing of the lower limbs, the *tout ensemble* is eminently peculiar and decidedly ugly. It is well for the world at large that some persons should be devoid of humour, because it may even be hoped that there are one, or even two, who will be found willing to appear in public—say, in Oxford Street—in the costume which they have designed. One such public exhibition of themselves would be quite sufficient to extinguish the Knickerbocker Corps, and to explode a movement which only tends to bring ridicule upon the whole sex.

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