

efficiency. Every nurse, therefore, who is eligible for the Territorial Service should consider whether it is not her duty to express her readiness to serve in it if called upon to do so.

As is now well known, General Hospitals, 23 in number, and each containing 520 beds, are to be organised throughout the country for the reception of the thousands of sick and wounded who, in the case of invasion, will be brought in from the army in the field. "Under the new scheme they will be the nucleus of a regular system of volunteer aid, in which there will be wide scope for patriotism of a very practical kind on the part of both men and women."

"The strange thing is," Miss Haldane points out, "that it has only now been pressed home on the people of this country how absolutely necessary such hospitals *in posse* actually are, and how absolutely impossible it would be for civil hospitals, in a time of great want and distress (as a time of war must necessarily be), to grapple with an enormous number of sick and wounded in addition to their ordinary patients. . . ."

"But having got hospital buildings and hospital equipment ready to hand, and a hospital staff ready to step into their places, it is evident that a supply of nurses is also requisite. And it is clear also that these must be as carefully and definitely arranged for as all the other portions of a well-considered medical corps. Were war to threaten we all know how our nurses would be more than ready to step into the breach. All would volunteer, suitable and unsuitable, and in the hurry and confusion many of the latter would take the places which should have been occupied by the former. Hence, a scheme for enlisting nurses has been completely thought out, and though their enrolment is only now beginning, there is every probability that the women will prove themselves to be as patriotic and self-sacrificing as their brothers, even when the air is still and undisturbed by that occult influence which by the scoffer has been termed "scarlet fever," and which often causes ordinary duties, however pressing they may be, to seem tame and unimportant."

After describing the organisation of the Service, Miss Haldane concludes: "Nurses must regard themselves, when joining the largest Nursing Service under the Crown, as preparing to take a part in the great national organisation, the duties and responsibilities of which

are by no means limited by the bounds of nursing work in the ordinary sense of the word. They are entering upon a service whose humanitarian side is now so thoroughly recognised by the world that it hardly requires to be emphasised; the work of the hospital nurse as "a succourer of many" does not, in the twentieth century, require to be dwelt on. But there is now another side to the nurse's life which is very different from any conceived of when nursing was first reorganised by that wonderful band of good women who made it what it is, a profession on which the blessings of rich and poor alike fall. Nursing has now come into touch with science in a way never dreamed of before that advance in bacteriological knowledge came to pass which has raised the importance of the nurse's work so greatly. A nurse to be a good nurse must not only be a kindly tactful woman, but an intelligent one as well, ready to do her work with knowledge and understanding, and this requires long training and instruction. But more than that, in army nursing, the nurse should realise that she forms part of a great organisation making for efficiency, and that her rôle, both in peace and war, is to play her part—and no unimportant part—in maintaining the organisation in this condition of efficiency. She has to pursue those business methods which make wheels work smoothly, to prevent wastage all round, whether of lives or the nation's property: such work requires intelligence and training, the more the better. And she requires also that self-discipline which enables her to assist in maintaining discipline amongst those with whom she comes in contact, whether they be subordinates or patients. This discipline is probably nowhere so well acquired as in that marvellous example of good organisation—a well managed hospital. It is to obtain for the good of the citizen army the benefits accruing from training such as this—training in our country brought to perfection such as no other nation can boast of—that the scheme was devised for utilising that valuable material for assisting in the national defence. Women cannot don the sword and helmet, but they can fight their nation's battles just as truly, if, perhaps, more subtly. And this is the work they are being called upon to do."

The Office of the Territorial Nursing Service is at 31a, Mortimer Street, London, W., and the Secretary Miss Sidney Browne, R.R.C., from whom information as to the conditions of service may be obtained. We do not doubt that the applications for admission to the Service will exceed the posts to be filled.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)