

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,400.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1915.

Vol. LIV

EDITORIAL.

THE AFTERMATH OF WAR.

One of the results of the war which will have to be faced in the near future is the employment of disabled soldiers. Already there are in this country a number of wounded Belgians who can never again serve with the colours for which they have fought so magnificently, and their future must be regarded as a trust by every able bodied person, whose life, and the lives of those dear to him, are the gift of those who have defended them from the onslaughts of a pitiless enemy.

There are to be seen in our streets pitiful examples of the ruthlessness of war. Writing in the press appealing for temporary homes for disabled Belgians, a correspondent says "Anyone who will be at the pains to convey these crippled men through London will be instantly struck by the looks of pity and sympathy cast upon them by both men and women all along the way.

"Policemen will hold up the traffic for them, stolid railway porters will help them along like brothers. Unable to speak our language, they yet use a common speech that instantly reaches all hearts; and the stiff right arm that has lost its office, the hand wanting its fingers, the paralysed shoulder, the bent back, the twisted foot that never will step out again, such are the syllables of dumb appeal."

Our sympathy goes out to these stricken men, but sympathy must not be allowed to effervesce, but be translated into action. Now, when their services and their injuries are so prominently before us, is the time to consider what should be done for these sufferers, lest in the future, when the war is a memory of the past, their needs should be forgotten. At the present moment there is ever vividly before us our debt to these brave Belgian soldiers, for we realize

vividly the devastation in Flanders and contrast it with the security we enjoy.

For our own disabled men, as has already been pointed out, adequate provision must be made by the country, adequate compensation it can never give them, but it can secure them and those dependent on them, from the menace of poverty. But this is not all, a man accustomed to the active life of a soldier will be ill content unless he has some occupation, and the problem is to give him some employment in which he can find interest, and an outlet for his activities.

This is also the aim of the Belgian Government, for already it is proposed by the authorities to establish semi-military camps for injured Belgian soldiers where, under a certain discipline they will learn trades, and fit themselves to take part, as useful citizens in the life of a newly restored Belgium. The "Wounded Allies Relief Committee" are appealing for help for this purpose, both in the form of houses standing in their own grounds, and of funds to furnish and maintain them, offers of which may be sent to M. Albert Vandervelde at the Grand Hotel, Northumberland Avenue, S.W.

There are many who will wish to have the honour of taking some share in "reviving the life of a newly restored Belgium," for all hearts overflow with gratitude to the country which has so gallantly fulfilled its pledges, at the cost of all, with the exception of its honour, that it holds most dear. That is crowned with an imperishable lustre, which, through all the ages, so long as time endures, will never fade.

The present is the moment when we should endeavour to make provision not only for the material needs of disabled sailors and soldiers, but by providing them with occupations to protect them from "the dire compulsion of unfertile days."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)