

of Nursing Sisters in our Army Nursing Service does not amount to 80, a mere handful in case of real emergency. It is true these have within the last few years been supplemented by the formation of the Army Nursing Reserve, but even so we must admit that the provision does not so far reach the standard requisite for rendering efficient service. It is a matter for congratulation, therefore, that the military authorities have recognised this fact, and are setting themselves to rectify it. For a nursing service, to be at its best in time of war, must be organized in time of peace. When the services of nurses are actually needed, all enquiries into their credentials, their qualifications, and their suitability, should have been already made, and they should be ready to proceed at once to any post to which they may be assigned. For this reason, the formation of the British Central Committee of the Red Cross will be welcomed by all those who have the interest of the sick and wounded at heart. If carried out on wise and efficient lines, it can only be productive of good, and it is at least much that we shall now have an official channel through which offers of aid may be made to the authorities. Such offers have never been wanting, but so far, much willing service has been unavailable and unused, because of the lack of organization. It is necessary, if it is to be made use of, that the naval and military authorities should know the extent of the aid upon which they can rely, and that those who are willing to render such aid should, from time to time, be informed of the nature of the services likely to be required of them.

The means to achieve this end is to bring the Societies already existing into touch with the War Office, and then to supplement their work by further organization. The first of these requirements has already been fulfilled by the Conference which has taken place; the second, we do not doubt, will be the outcome of it. We may therefore hope to see, in the near future, the establishment of such an Army Nursing Service as will be sufficient, not only for our own needs, but which will enable us to render the assistance, which it is the first impulse of every true nurse to offer, to other nations in case of need. We have only congratulations to offer the War Office on the step which has been taken, and we hope that the organization of an efficient nursing service will, under the newly formed Committee, proceed apace.

## Annotations.

### A MUNICIPAL NURSING HOME.

Now that public attention is being directed to the need of making some provision for the respectable aged and indigent poor, other than that of the shelter of the workhouse, where they are compelled to associate with the idle and vicious; an account of how they manage things in Germany is of great interest. Those who have friends amongst the poor in this country know well how the dread of the "House" haunts the sleeping and waking hours of many of the aged poor. They will put up with any hardship, endure any privation, rather than "break up their home" and submit to what to them appears to be the disgrace of going to the workhouse. In days gone by, the religious houses afforded welcome shelter to many of these cases, but, with their suppression, provision had to be made by the State for those who would otherwise be destitute. The times were hard ones, the organisation was undertaken exclusively by men, and the result is that we have developed a system which, while not deterring the idle and dissolute from coming upon the rates, strikes terror into the hearts of the respectable poor, and rides rough-shod over their tenderest sensibilities.

In Germany, apparently, they manage things better, and provide "Nursing Homes" for the aged poor. An example of such a Home is that at Düsseldorf, which is under the care of Sisters. The inmates take with them their own furniture and clothing, as well as their Lares and Penates, which give an aspect of homeliness to their quarters. There are no male officers in the Institution, which is managed entirely by the Sisters. The total working expenses, including the salaries of the doctor and the Roman Catholic and Protestant Chaplains, amount to £589, the services of the Sisters being gratuitous. The cost of food per inmate, including five meals, is eightpence a day. The town is divided into districts, each having an honorary guardian, upon whom the duty devolves of seeking out cases, and recommending them for admission. The contrast presented to our own system is a strong one, and it is to be hoped that in the future some scheme may be evolved, whereby provision may be made for the aged poor on more humanitarian and sympathetic lines than that at present afforded by the cold shelter of the "House."

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