

original Bill provided for nurses' quarters, pensions, and preparatory schools. These points, with many others, we now hope to gain through the Superintendent of Nurses.

The question of establishing a permanent nursing service in the army is a very serious one. The United States has not been a fighting nation in the past, but the future, with our newly acquired territory, opens up possibilities in this direction which cannot be ignored. At present the services of the nurses are necessary, but how long this will last we cannot say, and in the future we face the probability of having to provide for a large number of enlisted nurses whose services are not required in army hospitals in such a way that should a sudden emergency arise, we could at short notice call into action a nursing staff thoroughly equipped in military methods. This contingency we hope to meet through the means of preparatory schools connected with one or more large army hospitals in which graduate nurses can receive six months' training in army nursing. From among those who successfully pass this probationary period we propose to keep a carefully selected list of nurses who can be called upon at any time for two years' service. By this method we hope to avoid the evil effects of having a larger number of nurses connected with any post than would be actually necessary for the service. This is a matter which will require careful working out, and we hope to gain much valuable information from you upon these points, as you have probably solved some of its difficulties.

I have made no mention of naval nursing for the reason that our navy has not required the services of the woman nurse. There has been no special sickness among the men, and unless some emergency arises to call for assistance from our profession we shall not seek admittance to their hospitals until sure of our ground in the army.

A VOLUNTEER CORPS OF NURSES.

By MRS. NORRIE.

Corresponding Secretary Danish National Council.

LADIES,—When I sought the opportunity to speak before you it was not to satisfy a sudden whim. For years I have seized every occasion which presented itself to express my opinion about a question which I have had much at heart from my first youth: "Nursing Organization"—first the aim of it.

Well then, I think, when we speak about organizing nursing, the object we seek to attain will be the best possible care for sick people.

To obtain this, everybody who understands even but very little about nursing, will tell you that

it will be absolutely necessary to establish Nursing Schools at all the large hospitals, in order to have an army of thoroughly trained nurses, and I fully agree with this statement; but I will add, this will never be sufficient! It will be quite impossible to have thoroughly trained nurses enough to meet the need of war and emergency, and even if you had trained nurses in sufficient numbers, they could not be at your disposal when wanted; in time of peace and public health, no doubt, they would have been obliged to seek other work, and thus have got out of training.

What, then, shall we do to have a sufficiently large nursing army at our disposal?

We must look to the male armies—how are they organized? Well, they are divided into three classes: officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates.

Thus, men have found it practical to arrange the armies they organised to spread death and disaster; and, I think, we might organise the armies, which we will organise for the purpose of fighting death and disaster, on the same lines. We must have officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, in our army, too—in other words, corresponding to the officers, we will have physicians and surgeons; corresponding to the non-commissioned officers, we must have the thoroughly trained nurses; and corresponding to the privates—well, here I will take the liberty to make a proposition:

The hospitals should, on certain conditions, open their doors to every young woman who would like to go there for three or six months, in order to learn how to care for her own sick folk, and how to assist the trained nurses when war or another emergency might occur. And in this way we might organise a corps of privates in our army.

During three or six months a young woman may very well learn how to take temperature, how to put on a poultice, and many other things, which everyone of us will be obliged to perform in our homes more than once every year. And she will learn to understand—at least, if she is taught to—that if she will obtain the honour of being a thoroughly trained nurse, she must spend as many years at a hospital as she now spends months. But she will learn more, or, at least, she may learn more; that depends upon the trained nurse, who will have to drill her. Well, then, she will learn to obey the instructions given to her, she will learn to work under the direction of the physician and the nurse, she will learn to assist the nurse at making the bed, at moving the patient, at bathing the patient, and so on.

Now, if you arrange so that you have a sufficient number of trained nurses to meet the need of nursing in hospitals and in private cases

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)