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## Editorial.

### MILITARY NURSING.

More and more the work of nurses is becoming of national importance, so that their efficiency is a question which concerns all sections of the community. They are required not only in the hospitals and as district nurses, but one after another of the great Government departments are employing them increasingly, and the War Office alone gives employment to many hundreds.

The Secretary of the War Office has announced that, in order to provide for the necessary expansion of personnel on the outbreak of war, it has been decided to proceed with the formation of a reserve of nurses in connection with Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, and that the Nursing Board has been instructed to draw up regulations for admission to the proposed reserve.

Thus there is not only the regular Military Nursing Service to be staffed, but the Army Nursing Reserve and the Territorial Reserve. It is of the greatest importance that the nurses of all three departments—more especially those whose duties take them abroad, both with the Army in the field and on foreign service—should be picked women of the highest integrity as well as professionally proficient, for they carry the honour of their profession in their hand in conditions where the ordinary support of public opinion is removed, and their own rectitude is often their sole guide in difficult situations.

We do not believe, however, that the War Office will have any difficulty in finding as many nurses as it requires, of the right type, even when the large demands likely to be made in connection with the Territorial Scheme are considered, provided that this Scheme is judiciously organised

on the right lines by an expert Committee of Selection. Nurses were never more alive than at present to their patriotic duty, and in the case of Army nursing it is now performed under good conditions of service.

In this connection it may be noted that there are at the present time some vacancies for staff nurses in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service which are to be filled immediately. The rate of pay, beginning at £40 per annum and increasing to £45, with the possibilities of promotion as vacancies occur, and an ultimate pension, afford an opportunity of congenial work. The drawback, no doubt, is that now that all the principal posts have been filled by ladies whose military service will be their life's work, promotion is necessarily somewhat slow. Nevertheless, to the young the prospects afforded by the Military Nursing Service are good.

The varied life of the nurse in a military hospital must also be taken into consideration. She moves about not only to different hospitals in the United Kingdom, but must also take her turn on foreign service, and nothing is of greater educational value.

The conditions under which Staff Nurses enter the Service are that they must be of good social position, between the ages of 25 and 35, and must possess a certificate of not less than three years' training and service in medical and surgical nursing in a civil hospital of not less than 100 beds.

We hope that the same standard will be maintained throughout the Army Nursing Service Reserves. We should indeed like to see the three-year certificate adopted as a standard. When a Nurses' Registration Act comes into force the Government Services will no doubt employ only registered nurses, but until that time the nurses selected for the important national duty of military nursing should be picked women with a full hospital certificate.

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