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## Editorial.

### PATRIOTISM.

The care of the sick and wounded in time of war is a duty which commends itself to every member of the community, and no sooner does war break out than the authorities are inundated with offers of service from competent and incompetent, practical and sentimental persons, all desirous of proceeding immediately to the seat of war, to the great embarrassment of over-worked officials. But at last there is hope that order is to be evolved out of chaos. Impulsive offers of service when hostilities are declared are usually more indicative of kindness of heart, or a desire for excitement, than of skill in the care of the sick. In the case of the Army, the declaration of war means that each man, well-drilled and efficient, must be ready to step into his place—one item in a vast machine which in expert hands is to vanquish the enemy. That is the science of war; there is no hesitation, no doubt—certainty and decision are essential to success.

And as with the combatant Army, so with the one whose mission is to apply the science of healing. If nurses are to be effective in future wars they must prepare for service in time of peace, must know the routine of a military hospital and their relation to those with whom they are to work, so that when their services are needed they too will be found effective, and ready to fill the places and discharge the duties assigned to them—not with the goodwill of the amateur, but with the disciplined skill which is the distinguishing characteristic of a well-trained and efficient worker.

The present Secretary of State for War, with a foresight which should earn the gratitude of the country, has placed before it a scheme for the care of the sick and

wounded, in the event of foreign invasion, so simple and effective that general surprise is now felt at our previous want of preparation, and on all sides the organisation of the Territorial Force is commended. The military hospitals may, however, be perfectly appointed and equipped, the services of the most eminent members of the medical profession may be at the disposal of the War Office authorities, but the co-operation of well-trained nurses is also essential. If the doctor represents the scientific side of the healing art the nurse represents the practical one. Both are needed to secure efficiency.

The formation of the Nursing Service of the Territorial Army is a call to patriotism, for the Territorial Force will only be embodied if an enemy succeeds in landing on our shores, when the country will be in danger. Every nurse, therefore, who is eligible to serve in connection with it should hasten to express her willingness to do so, and avail herself now of the opportunities offered her to become conversant with the duties to be required of her on the outbreak of war.

It is now twenty-one years ago since we forwarded to the War Office a memorandum on the subject of a Volunteer Nurse Corps—a subject in which we have always taken the deepest interest—which was politely acknowledged and presumably pigeon-holed. We have also before us as we write a circular by Surgeon-Major (now General) Evatt, C.B., which deals with two matters very much before the public at the present time—the “proposal to form a Corps of Volunteer Female Nurses for service in the Army hospitals in the field, with suggestions as to the incorporation of the nursing profession.” It is dated 1885, and in one corner is written in manuscript, “The prophetic circular.” May it prove so speedily.

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