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Editorial.

THE CALL OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued an appeal which they commend "in solemn entreaty to the whole body of the faithful" to keep the mission of the Church to the whole world in the forefront of its thought, prayer and action. They particularly impress upon the Church the urgency of the present situation in the Far East and in Africa, and write further "new movements—political, educational and religious—are stirring, fraught with momentous issues for the future of the world. A door of special opportunity is open. We know not when it may be closed. We are jealous for the honour of the Church of England that it may be among the first messengers of Christ to enter in." Such an appeal must be received by all members of the Anglican Church with the consideration which is its due, but in this journal we desire especially to emphasise its claim upon nurses.

The time has gone past when in any branch of the mission field the services of untrained workers are in much demand. The first essential for mission work is no doubt the desire to witness to the faith of Christ, to hand on to others the knowledge which we ourselves believe to be of supreme value.

But, given this qualification, much more is necessary to equip the missionary for her work: (1) Disciplined training in some special branch; (2) the power to live and work with people of different temperaments; (3) facility in learning a foreign language, for it is obvious that to gain any hold over people it is necessary to speak to them in their own tongue.

We have emphasised these points because the Church abroad needs the best that the Church at home can give it. The expense

of the outfit and passage of each missionary, defrayed out of offerings which represent much self-denial, makes it essential that those on whose behalf such expense is incurred should be trained and tested—mere goodwill and a wish to be useful are not sufficient qualifications to warrant such expenditure.

For this reason the services of fully-trained nurses are especially valuable. They are specially fitted by their professional training for work which the Divine Master himself laid down as an integral part of mission work. By Divine command the preaching of the Gospel and the healing of the sick must go hand in hand; and all those who have had experience of mission work, whether at home or abroad, will agree that the healing of the sick, which so largely depends upon skilled nursing, is not merely incumbent upon us as a humanitarian work, but is one of the most powerful agents in bringing the heathen under the influence of the preachers of the Gospel, and of inducing them to accept their message, when the practical effects of Christianity have been exemplified before them in the self-sacrificing lives of the nurses which have been daily under their keen observation in hospital wards.

It is to the credit of the nursing profession that they are not wanting in physical courage. We hear of its members doing their duty calmly and methodically in an alarming fire, through the bombardment of a town, in a small-pox epidemic, of their wrestling with lunatics on a narrow parapet, of their quiet consideration for others during a wreck at sea, and we make little of it because we expect no less of them. Those who are foremost at the post of danger have qualities which are invaluable when the banner of the cross is raised, and recruits needed for the brave army in which the soldiers who serve under it are enrolled.

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