

would not dwell. The conditions of warfare in the present day rendered it imperative, for the large size of armies, and the destructive effects of modern weapons led to such enormous casualties, that it was a most difficult undertaking to cope with them quickly and satisfactorily. Were the Regular Army engaged in a big campaign its medical department could not meet all the demands that would be made on it, as the South African War showed, and the same remark applied to the Territorial Medical Service should there be an invasion of this country, and one or more battles fought.

There were, of course, those who held that Government should have ready in peace time sufficient medical aid to be equal to any emergency, but a little reflection showed that this view was an unreasonable one, as such a policy would mean a very heavy annual outlay for personnel and stores, with, of course, additional taxation. For these reasons only sufficient personnel and material were provided to meet the wants of the Regular Army in peace or in any of the smaller wars that the Empire was engaged in from time to time.

Forthcoming as civilian aid undoubtedly would be in the case of a prolonged campaign or attempted invasion, it was important to remember that civilian aid must be given through a definite and proper channel, and receive the sanction of the naval and military authorities, for, were it furnished in a haphazard way, it might be a source of great danger, as under the guise of it spies might gain access to an army and defeat a general's best laid plans, a possibility which would far outweigh any humanitarian advantages. It was this fact that led the military authorities for so long to look askance on civilian aid, and often to reject it, so that the sick and wounded in warfare formerly underwent many privations and much increased suffering which might have been prevented by such aid.

To Henri Dunant, of Geneva, was due the solution of the difficulty. Saddened by the terrible sufferings of the wounded after the battle of Solferino in 1859, where for days they lay untended, and convinced of the absolute necessity for civilian aid in dealing with the casualties of modern warfare, he pressed the matter unceasingly on the Governments of civilised nations, and eventually had the satisfaction of seeing his efforts crowned with success. At an international conference held at Geneva in 1863 a series of recommendations were drawn up, and at a second conference those recommendations were agreed to by twelve nations, and embodied in what was known as the Geneva Convention; in 1865 Great Britain agreed to it, and the last nation to do so was

Japan in 1887. In 1906 the British Red Cross Society was founded, and replaced the National Aid Society and the British Red Cross Council, and carried on work, not only in the United Kingdom, but throughout the Empire by county committees and branches.

The Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, and the President of the Ulster Branch of the Irish Nurses' Association, Lady Hermione Blackwood, were at home on Wednesday in last week to the members of the above Association. The weather was perfect, and the members greatly enjoyed the afternoon, and appreciated the hospitality of their kind hostesses.

League News.

THE ROYAL SOUTH HANTS NURSES' LEAGUE.

A meeting of the General Council of the Royal South Hants Nurses' League was last week held in the Staff Probationers' Sitting-room in the Hospital. Many letters of apology were read from those who were unable to be present. Both the Secretary and Treasurer presented satisfactory reports. The Honorary Officers and all the members of the Executive Committee were re-elected. The Bye-laws were considered, and certain minor alterations agreed upon. It was also decided that members of the nursing profession not holding the hospital certificate might be elected to honorary membership at the discretion of the Council. It was decided that the participation of the League in a public memorial to Miss Isla Stewart should be considered at a later date, when a definite proposition was before the Council. After other business had been transacted, a very pleasant social gathering was held.

K. WINTERSCALE,
Hon. Sec., R.S.H. N. League.

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

The Queen has become patron of the Royal National Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest, Ventnor.

The Council of the Hospital Saturday Fund have fixed as the date of their thirty-seventh annual collection October 15th, and committees have now been formed in most of the metropolitan districts. The receipts from the industrial establishments, etc.—the result of a weekly or other periodical collection—are so far nearly £1,900 ahead of the corresponding period of last year. The fund for 1909 amounted to £30,662.

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