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## EDITORIAL.

### RURAL NURSING IN AMERICA.

An instance of the usefulness of a national Red Cross Society, when efficiently organized by professional people, is to be found in work done by the American Red Cross for the organization of rural nursing.

In the United States of America, although district nursing (or visiting nursing as it is there called) has attained a high degree of excellence in many of the cities, it has not, so far, been highly systematized through the rural districts, as there has been no central organization there, corresponding to the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses in this country. The American Red Cross Society has now supplied this need, and organized a "Red Cross Rural Nursing Service"—a big co-operative movement—the purpose of which is to maintain high standards of public health nursing, and increase the demand for the best qualified public health nurses, of whom the smaller communities stand so greatly in need.

This Service is prepared to supply such visiting nurses for rural communities and small cities, and we learn from its announcement that Red Cross nurses may be engaged by individuals, clubs, societies, corporations, industrial concerns, or by Government boards. The salaries of the nurses are raised locally, but the Red Cross meets the expense of general supervision and inspection of the work as well as of the forms required by the nurses, and provides the insignia used by them.

Confidence in the organization of the service is assured by the composition of the committee of which Miss Mabel T. Boardman is Chairman, Miss J. A. Delano Vice-Chairman, and which includes such honoured names as Miss Lilian D. Wald, Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, Mrs. William K. Draper,

Miss Annie W. Goodrich, Dr. Winford Smith and others. The Superintendent of Nurses is Miss Fannie F. Clement.

This is a far more useful bit of work than to give young women a superficial knowledge of first aid to the wounded, and encourage them to believe that while trained nurses are limited to the base hospitals in time of war, they will render first aid near the front, as is suggested in connection with the work of the British Red Cross Society.

The nurses of the "Red Cross Rural Nursing Service" are directly responsible to their local committees, and if a nurse has been assigned to a certain community she retains her position only upon recommendation of her committee. As far as possible members of the Service are assigned to the section of the country where they wish to live. Committees already employing visiting nurses are advised that it would be an advantage to affiliate with the Red Cross in this work as it would be a guarantee that the nurse employed had attained a definite standard as to professional ability and character, and had received special training in public health nursing or some other form of social service. Both local associations and nurses realize that they have at their back a big national organization, and the Superintendent of Nurses, or Supervisors, keep isolated workers in touch with new methods.

It is expected that statistics gathered by the Red Cross Rural Nurses will be of value, as showing the prevalence of diseases, and the relation they bear to nationality, occupation, housing, &c.

We congratulate the American Red Cross Society on this useful piece of public work, to which our attention has been directed by an English nurse who hopes to join the Service.

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