

be a paid post. This is not a private Society, but a public Service working directly under the War Office, and it behoves them for the credit of the country that it should not be content with anything less than the highest efficiency. Trained nurses should also be represented on the Central Committee. On the Executive Committee of the Red Cross Society, appointed by the Council, there are twelve names, all men, two of whom are doctors. Not one woman, let alone a nurse. On the Uniform Sub-Committee, there are four names; only one a woman, and no nurse; this probably accounts for the very curious articles of uniform that have appeared from time to time. On the Voluntary Aid Advisory Sub-Committee appointed by the Executive Committee, there are twenty-one names, and here at least one would expect to find the names of well-known professional experts. But here again, no; there are Countesses, doctors, army men, &c., but never a nurse. On the Medical Relief Sub-Committee, Balkan War, 1912-1913, there are fourteen names, five of whom are women (all peeresses). On the Finance Sub-Committee there is no woman. In the list of members of the Council, which number thirty-nine, we do at last find the name of one nurse, that of Miss Ethel McCaul. It is indeed time that the British Red Cross Society set its house in order. It is curious that they should set so little value on expert professional advice as they have quite a satisfactory definition of a Trained Nurse—see Form C., Date 18th July, 1913, page 2—"By the term 'Trained Nurse' is meant a nurse who has completed a three years' course of training in a general hospital of not less than 100 beds, having a Nurse Training School attached, and who, having qualified in the Examinations of the Institution, has received a certificate to this effect." Another point that might be considered, is a more thorough and centralised training, with a Central Examination which members should be required to pass before obtaining their badge. At present all kind of First Aid certificates of different values are recognised by the War Office, from the National Fire Brigades' Union to the University of London King's College for Women. A higher standard and a Central Examination would probably be welcomed by many, and would keep those out who are merely playing at it. Certain detachments give great prominence to the "military" side of it, and though flagging, signalling, riding, &c., are doubtless very attractive, it certainly has given a large section of the public the idea that the members are rather "playing at soldiers" than training in first-aid work. It is not only in war that the members of the Red Cross Society should be of use, but in any times of national disaster, and also in time of peace. In this connection the Red Cross Society of America and some other Continental Societies are far ahead of us. There was an article in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING not long ago showing the splendid work done by the American Red Cross Society during the terrible floods in that country. Again at the time of the terrible volcanic disaster

in Messina, a detachment arrived there in 24 hours from France. In Germany the Vaterländische Frauen Verein and the Red Cross Society maintain Red Cross Hospitals as Training Schools and undertake much Social Care work such as the Anti-Tuberculosis Campaign, maintain Veterans' Homes for the reception of old soldiers unable to earn a living, and other work of this kind—useful to the community. In France also much useful social work is being done by the French Red Cross Society which consists of (1) Société de Secours aux Blessés; (2) L'union des femmes de France; (3) Association des Dames françaises. They provide Sanatorium treatment for soldiers invalided for tuberculosis, accommodate them afterwards in agricultural colonies, establish dispensaries and convalescent homes, and help in any cases of national calamity, such as the recent floods in Paris. In Italy the Red Cross Society carries on a vigorous anti-malaria campaign, and in 1910 it distributed over 1,000 lbs. of quinine to the inhabitants of malarious districts. All this of course is in addition to the ordinary Red Cross work. There have been signs of late that the British Red Cross Society is beginning to awake. There is indeed much that needs altering before this national scheme can be in any way an efficient service. If they could be induced to consider the three points that have been brought forward in this article, it would be a step towards acquiring the high state of efficiency which we must all hope for in this important and national work.

(1) The necessity of attracting many more fully-trained nurses. The work done would then be more "trained" and the ordinary members would thus insensibly attain to a higher standard. This should be done by recognising them as officers, and by insisting that in every case the Lady Superintendent should be a fully trained nurse, making the post a paid one if a voluntary worker cannot be obtained.

(2) By recognising the necessity of expert professional advice, and providing for the representation of nurses on the Central Committee.

(3) The advisability of a more thorough training for the members, which might be accomplished by the institution of a Central, or at any rate a uniform, examination of a practical and theoretical nature.

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LEGAL MATTERS.

Mr. Justice Darling has fixed Monday, the 26th inst., for the re-hearing of Nurse Reid's action for assault, against Mr. and Mrs. Cupper. When the action was heard on December 5th and 6th, the jury disagreed. On December 9th and 10th, an action between the same parties for slander was heard before Mr. Justice Darling, when judgment was given for the defendants.

Trained nurses have been in evidence in the Law Courts this week, several being concerned in cases which have been heard.

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