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EDITORIAL.

ACTIVE SERVICE.

During the past week the stern realities of war have been forced upon our consciousness by first-hand evidence. First, the wounded are beginning to arrive, and some hundreds are being cared for in military and civil hospitals—an earnest of that multitude for whose accommodation many thousands of beds are available.

Then we have had the arrival of refugees from Belgium, and there is not a woman amongst us who will not desire to extend warm sympathy and practical help to women of the brave nation which has suffered so cruelly for honourably keeping its compact. It will be a privilege and a pleasure if we can be of use to any of these visitors to our shores.

Nurses who are desirous of going on active service are beginning to realize that it is not necessary to leave their own country to render service to those injured in the war; for, not only to the hospitals, but also to private houses the wounded are returning, and private nursing institutions are being called upon for nurses to care for patients recently returned from the battlefields of Belgium.

But from the first it has been evident that nurses were needed both in Belgium and France to supplement those which these countries can provide.

This was confirmed by the request we received by telegram from Dr. Marcelle, of Brussels, for 30 nurses. The promptitude with which this call was answered enabled Miss Cutler and thirteen nurses to report themselves to Dr. Marcelle the evening before the German occupation of Brussels. In reply to a letter to the Press, asking for donations to enable the remainder of the nurses, for whom Dr. Marcelle asked, to be

sent out, we have received a most kind response. As, however, communication with Brussels was cut off the day after the first party arrived, no more nurses could be got through to Dr. Marcelle, but every effort is being made to benefit the wounded with the money received, in accordance with the intention of the donors.

We shall be pleased to receive any donations towards the expenses of the members of the International Nursing Corps, formed through this Journal, which our readers can collect. Any sums subscribed will be spent on sending abroad thoroughly trained and experienced nurses, with a responsible sister-in-charge of each party, and we calculate that £20 will cover the expenses of a nurse for three months. So far, the nurses sent are only receiving a salary of £1 per week, and many would be willing to forego even that sum, but this would mean depriving others of their work, and their right to serve their country on active service, unless they had private means, which would be unjust.

We are frequently asked by nurses whether there is anything they can do to fit themselves the better for active service.

It is becoming increasing apparent that those who proceed abroad should be re-vaccinated against smallpox, unless they have been satisfactorily vaccinated within the last few years. In Paris this course is being urged upon all inhabitants by public placards. Further, as experience has proved that the incidence of enteric fever, that scourge of armies, is reduced in a remarkable degree by vaccination nurses are being strongly advised, both by individual medical practitioners, and also by the St. John Ambulance Association, to be vaccinated against enteric fever, before taking up work in places where, in all probability, they will be exposed to infection.

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