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EDITORIAL.

THE RAISON D'ÊTRE OF THE FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

British nurses who are selected by the Committee of the French Flag Nursing Corps under the authority of the French Minister for War, and the French War Office, for service in the Corps have every reason to be proud of the position which they hold, first because M. Millerand has paid them an unprecedented compliment in introducing their skilled services into the military hospitals of France, and, secondly, because of the great debt we owe to our brave Allies. As a contemporary well points out we are not only helping France and Belgium, but fighting our own battle on the territory of our Allies, and the integrity of both Belgium and France are necessary to the safety of England.

But not only do motives of patriotism inspire nurses privileged to care for the sick and wounded French soldiers, for every man and woman in this country must have been moved to profound admiration by the heroism and gallantry of the soldiers of France, and the opportunity of being able to demonstrate, in a practical way, their gratitude to the devoted French Army which has fought, with such supreme courage and tenacity, not only in the interest of France, but to protect our shores from invasion, is one of which every British nurse must be proud.

It is a happiness indeed that the work of nurses trained in the best nursing schools of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland in the most modern methods is of value to our Allies, and it must be our pride to see that any request made by the French War Office for their assistance is promptly and fully met. Nothing could bind us more closely to the Nation whose soldiers have fought side by side with our own in the trenches than that our nurses should, in

French military hospitals, fight with the forces which bring death and disease in their train, and that they should wrest from these forces the lives of the brave men they seek as their prey, so that they may be restored either to the fighting line, or to the wives and families whose heroism, in its way, has equalled that of the men for whose return, crowned with the laurels of victory, they look forward so ardently.

The British nurse comes of a race famous for grappling with the foe, and for holding on to him with the tenacity of the bull dog bred in her island home; and the national characteristic which has made its sailors and soldiers second to none in the world, has made its nurses famous for the fight they wage over the sick bed of their patients, refusing, so long as life remains, to give up hope, and infusing into those in their care that hope and determination to put up a good fight, which so often set their feet on the road to recovery.

It has been suggested in certain unprofessional nurses' papers that aid to the French sick and wounded should only be supplied through the British War Office, or Red Cross Society, but we must point out that the French War Office has not yet relegated its authority to either one or the other, and it is in the highest degree improbable that either the President of the French Republic or the Minister for War will do so. Surely both the War Office and the British Red Cross Society must realize what a high compliment has been paid to British Nurses, and should be proud to further by all means in their power the work of the nurses who have been accepted by the French Government for service in its military hospitals, and accorded the rank of officers. The nurses it is true must be prepared for difficulties, for the conditions of service at home and abroad are very dissimilar, but we have no doubt that they will overcome them, and demonstrate to our Allies the value of trained nursing as practised in this country.

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