

THE
BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,421.

SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 1915.

Vol. LIV.

EDITORIAL.

HOLIDAYS.

Most strenuous workers, after eleven months on duty, feel the need for relaxation and rest, not necessarily for personal enjoyment, so much as for the renewal of the health and energy upon which their capacity to work depends. When work becomes a burden instead of a pleasure, when it needs determined effort to perform instead of being done easily and naturally, it is time to call a halt. For nature takes her revenge if the warnings given by the over-worked system are unheeded, and threatens incapacity more or less permanent if her warnings are ignored, and also because the quality of the work performed deteriorates, and to the conscientious worker this is a condition calling for immediate remedy.

Holidays this year therefore may be regarded as a duty as well as a pleasure, and those who perhaps would hesitate to spend money and time on personal enjoyment, when the country has need of both, will respond to the call of duty which has been much in our ears of late. To nurses especially the call is clearly insistent. We do not know how much greater demands may be made upon the nursing profession in the near future, than at present. But this we do know. The services of all available nurses are likely to be needed before this war is over. That being so, it behoves all who are able to get rest for body and mind as opportunity offers in order to keep themselves fit. It does not necessarily follow that this means a period of inaction. It is a well known axiom that rest may be secured by change of occupation, and we know one nurse of note who, acting upon it, hopes to spend her holidays in the ranks of the munition workers as she is anxious to "do her bit." Others may perhaps help in the harvest

fields and, in other ways, do work which is of national aid. While it must be remembered that the work of nurses in this direction must be unskilled, yet, we believe that workers who are trained and disciplined, and who understand the importance of being on duty to time, and of performing their share of the day's work in an orderly way, must be welcome in many places where employers are short-handed, and it is important that both hay and grain harvests should be gathered in without delay. We believe that there are many people this year who, while realizing the unwisdom of foregoing the holiday which they need, will wish that it shall not be one of wholly irresponsible pleasure, but that pleasure shall be combined with the performance of some bit of patriotic duty.

The problem is how to get in touch with work which wants doing, and which it is within the power of the volunteer to perform. Some nurses who are now working in town hospitals have country homes and can without difficulty get into touch with agricultural needs, and others may have friends who can put them on the right lines.

As the holidays of most nurses are so limited, nothing very elaborate can be undertaken or accomplished, but if there is the will to be of service the opportunity will not be lacking. Perhaps it will come to some in the possibility of relieving some tired worker for a while.

The thing which hard workers must bear in mind is that their primary duty is to return to work invigorated for the future, therefore, whatever form of holiday work their patriotism may lead them to adopt this must not be lost sight of. But a life in the open air, even if combined with occupations which leave the worker healthily tired at the close of the day, may be quite compatible with recuperation for a nurse whose duty is usually indoors, in the wards of an hospital.

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