

## NURSING AND THE WAR.

The accompanying portrait of Miss Margaret Clotilde Macdonald, Matron-in-Chief of the Canadian Army Nursing Service, which has sent some 700 Canadian trained nurses to this country, to take their share in the nursing of the sick and wounded, more especially those of the contingents which have come from Canada, will be received with pleasure by many Canadian Nurses, and the fact that the King has recognized their services to the Empire by bestowing the Royal Red Cross upon their chief nursing officer will be appreciated throughout the Dominion of Canada. Miss Macdonald has an office at Cecil Chambers, 86, Strand, W.C., from which she directs the work of the Service.

It may be stated literally that the salaries of nurses in many infirmaries have been raised at the point of the bayonet. Of course, it is the economic pressure of the war which has secured for many more adequate remuneration than they received before the war: when any special form of necessary labour is scarce it has to be paid for at a higher rate. Nursing in this country, being entirely unorganised work, and largely used in what are known as charitable institutions, has been very badly paid in so far as salary is concerned. Year by year the cost of treating the sick in hospital has risen and risen, owing to the greater cost of cleanliness, rent, rates, food, fire, laundry, scientific appliances, and male labour; thus skilled nursing has become more costly with every emolument provided for the nursing staff, but with this rise in the cost of living nurses have not realised that they have received higher pay.

War nursing is so popular amongst nurses that if the sick poor, the little children and their mothers, and the aged and chronic sick are to be

cared for, institutions responsible for their care must pay more highly to tempt nurses to do work which they find less interesting. It is all very human, and we cannot blame nurses overmuch for wishing a little "glory" on their own account.

The majority of voluntary and Red Cross workers, whose self-sacrifice is so constantly eulogised, have never even given a thought, nor an hour, to the care or solace of sick women and children, or the aged or mentally deficient poor. We have little hope that they will show a truer sympathy with real suffering when the war is past. Therefore do not let us grudge our real nurses—the women who throughout the Empire have done all the drudgery in the past—a passing change of work, which satisfies their love of country, even if a certain degree of excitement is also a factor in their desire to "go to the front." For our part we wish to see trained and skilled nursing available right up as near the front as possible.



MISS MARGARET CLOTILDE MACDONALD, R.R.C.

have fled into Russia, and are now reported to be in unspeakable misery and to be dying by hundreds. Those who have seen them declare their distress to be even worse than that endured last year by the Belgian and French peasants, because numbers and distances are greater, and they have, besides all their other ills, to face the rigours of a Russian winter.

Skilled workers are urgently wanted, so the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies has sent out an urgent appeal in support of Maternity and Relief Work among refugees in Russia.

The peasant population from the whole of the battle-line between the Russian armies and those of Germany and Austria (mainly Poles and Galicians)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)