

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

No. 1,489.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1916.

Vol. LVII.

**EDITORIAL.**

**THE NATIONAL MISSION.—THE CALL TO  
THE TRAINED NURSE.**

The call of the National Mission is to all classes of the community. To nurses who feel they know little about it and would like to know something more of its scope, we commend the paper No. 26 of the series published for the National Mission by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 68, Haymarket, S.W., "The Call to the Trained Nurse," by the Rev. E. F. Russell, than whom no one is better qualified to speak to nurses, or more willingly listened to by them, on their spiritual life.

The special object of the mission is, he tells us, to call upon us all "to face, and to confess with penitence our own individual share in the responsibility for the present awful war. The direct and immediate responsibility is, of course, Mr. Russell says, "not ours either as a nation or as individuals. . . . But indirectly, there has been, and still is, much in the life of the nation—the worship of money, of pleasure, and of place, the selfish disregard of the just claims of our neighbour, the preference of party interests to the interest of country, not to mention grosser moral evils—which leaves us in no doubt why the love of God is chastening and scourging us. And the most insignificant of us has, by her life and work, by what she has been, by what she has done, or left undone, influenced in some degree the character and action of the nation; has helped to form the nation's soul, its mind, its moral standards, its aims, and policy. England is the better, or the worse because of what we, each one of us, have been. We cannot isolate our life from the life of our nation, nor fence in what we are so that it may not tell upon our race. Whatever there is of evil on the

part of England in the present war, the evil that is in each English heart has been in part its cause. It is this public, widely spreading effect of our private life, not only so much of it as others see, but also of our hidden life and inconspicuous acts, which the Church calls upon us to recognize, and, so far as it has been evil, with penitence to deplore."

Mr. Russell reminds nurses that they hold in English life, deservedly, an honoured and a trusted place. The nurse "is not, as she knows well, in spite of all that the newspapers, and some grateful patients say, an angel; yet, though no angel, she is allowed everywhere to pass within the veil which screens the sacred privacies of 'home' and is trusted to know what no one else may know. Such trust is an honour, and it carries with it many sacred obligations. The call to repentance invites the nurse to examine how far in the past these obligations have been met."

Again, Mr. Russell points out that a nurse holds "much in trust from Christ that she is bound to use in accordance with His will. That will has assigned to her the patients who in succession come, and for a while stay under her care.

"They are Christ's wounded lambs and sheep, and He their Shepherd has made her to them the agent of His own compassion."

The call of the Mission is a call with which it takes time to correspond and it is just that of which a nurse has so little at her disposal. Mr. Russell, with practical wisdom says "it will take just precisely so much time as it may be in your power to give; no more is needed, but no less will serve."

Do not let us forget that the object of the Mission is a corporate one—to bring home to the individual the responsibility for a higher standard of purity and public spirit, in the national life.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)