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EDITORIAL.

THE INTERESTS OF MANKIND.

The noble address to Congress of President Wilson (U.S.A.) in which all the weight of his influence was given on the side of war with German autocracy, is a historic declaration, in the course of which he said :

"Our object is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish autocratic power, and to set up amongst really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and action as will henceforth ensure the observance of these principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved, and the freedom of its peoples and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic Governments backed by organised force, which is controlled wholly by their will and not by the will of their people. . . . Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to the common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own."

It is a matter for pride for American nurses that now that the die is cast the nursing department is the one Government Department in the country which is said to be really prepared for war. *The American Journal of Nursing* states "the Army Nurse Corps and the Navy Nurse Corps are at full strength, and their reserves, as represented by the Nursing Service of the Red Cross of nearly 8,000 of our most highly trained women, would be sufficient for any demand made upon it. Nurses did not need a second experience like the Spanish American War in order to see the need of preparedness for an emergency of this kind.

The immediate result of that experience was a concerted action on the part of our two national societies for a place in our Army for women nurses in time of peace, and naturally a similar service for the Navy followed."

Each of these Services has its own highly trained Superintendent; the Army Nurse Corps, Miss Dora E. Thompson, R.N., the Navy Nurse Corps, Miss Lenah S. Highee, M.L.A., R.N., with their official headquarters respectively in the War Department and the Department of the Navy at Washington, while the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service has as its Chairman Miss Jane A. Delano, R.N., under whose guidance and organization this Service has attained a high degree of efficiency.

The lesson of this preparedness is that the organization of skilled professions should be placed in the hands of members of the profession concerned. In this country, when war was declared, the British Red Cross Society had no Roll of trained nurses, with qualifications investigated, ready to be called up, because, although the Matrons' Council had constantly, over a period of many years, drawn attention to the need for such organization, no steps were taken to secure, or to authorise, the co-operation of the nursing profession. The organization of the Red Cross Nursing Service in the United States of America has been entrusted to an experienced Superintendent, and the result is 8,000 highly trained women ready for duty. We have no hesitation in saying that a similar number might have been at the disposal of our own Government at the outbreak of war had the British Red Cross Society invited the co-operation of the nursing profession in time of peace.

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