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## EDITORIAL.

### PROFESSIONAL RED CROSS GOVERNMENT.

The advent of the Units of American nurses in this country affords an opportunity of learning in detail the method of Red Cross organization in the United States.

It is well known that this organization, centralized in the beautiful Red Cross Building at Washington, is in professional hands, with Miss Delano as Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, and Miss Noyes as Director of the Nursing Corps. The Units, are drawn from the same institution, so that the members work together with the ease characteristic of a trained staff well acquainted with each other's methods. In peace time their organization is under the Red Cross, but, in time of war they are directly under the War Office as Reserve Army Nurses.

It is interesting to learn the procedure which must be observed before a nurse can be enrolled under the American Red Cross. She must have been trained in a general hospital containing beds for men, with an average of not less than fifty occupied beds; she must be endorsed by the Superintendent of her training School and by her Alumnae Association, which is required to fill in a form signed by the President and Hon. Secretary, and in which explicit questions are asked as to the dignity, energy, education, and personal appearance of the candidate, and whether she is a member in good standing. If she is unknown personally to those signing the form a personal interview is essential, and she must be registered in the State to which she belongs if a State Registration Act is in force there. If these forms are in order, the application goes forward through the local and State Red Cross organizations to Washington, when the candidate is usually accepted.

With her application form the candidate is

required to send in an essay on Red Cross Nursing, so that it will be realized that the qualifications required of the Red Cross Nurses are high, yet, in time of peace, some 8,000 nurses were enrolled, a number largely augmented now.

In regard to voluntary aid the Nurses' Aids, are, like the Nurses, enrolled under the professional heads of the Nursing Department at Washington, and selected by the Matrons. They have a definite amount of theoretical instruction and an insight into practical ward work before enrolment, and their name places them definitely in the position to which they belong as Nurses' Aids. In this way a great deal of willing and useful material is brought into line, and under professional control. The untrained commandant, wearing the uniform of the trained nurse, and assuming the duties of hospital Matron, with authority, recognized and supported by the War Office, over the skilled and trained nurse is an unknown quantity in American Military Nursing. The War Department in the United States recognizes for work on its Reserve in war time only those nurses who are recommended to it by the American Red Cross, and whose qualifications have been investigated and approved as prescribed.

Again, in organizing their Units for active service the American War Department have sent only graduate nurses, rightly holding—with true American perspicuity as to the value of the dollar—that only the best is worth paying for, and while this decision has caused some disappointment, there can be no doubt that it is a wise one. Money which is well spent on placing the services of the trained and tested nurse at the disposal of the sick and wounded, may be ill spent on a person, who may break down under a strain which should only be imposed on a seasoned worker.

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