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## EDITORIAL.

### A STRIP OF GOLD BRAID.

Every now and then we meet in our streets a soldier with a strip of gold braid on the left sleeve of his service dress jacket, and one hand goes instinctively to the salute for we know that he has not only fought, but been wounded in the service of the Empire.

There was a time when the Royal Red Cross (instituted on St. George's Day, 1883) denoted that a nurse had rendered conspicuous service on active duty, but, at the present time, it may mean no more than a few months' work in the military wards of a civil hospital, under ordinary conditions, or as a clerical worker, and its value has been cheapened thereby. A desire has for some time been growing up that there should be some further distinction for nurses who have been under fire, or rendered conspicuous service in the war zone.

In July last it was announced, in Army Orders, that, as distinctions in dress for Officers and Soldiers who have been wounded in any of the campaigns since 4th August, 1914, strips of gold Russia braid, two inches in length, will be worn on the service dress jacket, sewn perpendicularly on the left sleeve of the jacket to mark each occasion when wounded. This distinction is now to be accorded to members of the Military Nursing Services and V.A.D.s.

An Army Order dated June 7th, 1917, headed "Distinction in Dress for Members of Military Nursing Services who have been wounded" announces that "Approval is given for the extension of the provisions of Army Order 249 of 1916, to include members of the Military Nursing Services, including those of the Dominions, members of Volun-

tary Aid Detachments, and special probationers employed in military hospitals." We may therefore expect in the future to see the modest little strip of gold braid, which in itself is so small a thing, and yet betokens so much, on the sleeves of those nurses wounded under fire.

Nurses should in our opinion also be eligible for the Military Cross, as those working under the French War Office are eligible for the Croix de Guerre. At present, under exceptional circumstances of special bravery they have been awarded the Military Medal.

The desire is natural that those whose service is specially meritorious should receive some recognition which can be known and read of all men. And further, such recognition is the symbol representing the high traditions of the past, the aspirations of the present. The Victoria Cross has not made men brave, but it has been a great incentive to bravery. The deeds of the men who have won it have thrilled the souls, and stirred the imagination in youth of those who when they have arrived at man's estate have vied with their forbears in deeds of valour.

In like manner the strip of gold braid will in the future be the symbol that women as well as men have willingly exposed themselves to the guns of the most ruthless enemy ever known, and an example to those who come after them to uphold the high traditions which they have maintained.

Major Chapple has well said, "The story of women's service in this war — their loyalty to high tradition, their courage in every danger, their endurance in every hardship, their acceptance of war as a lesser evil than national dishonour, will be written in History to the credit of our time, and the glory of our Race."

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