

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

THE JUBILEE NURSE IN FRANCE.

The French have begun to discover the Jubilee Nurse in a roundabout way. It is true several attempts have been made to introduce "Jubilee" or "district" nursing into France, but the great difficulty in the way has so far been that district nursing is still considered by many the special work of the "Little Sisters of the Poor."

The Society of the *Infirmières Visiteuses* de France, founded by Mlle. de Montmort, has done good work, and taken a step in the right direction, but, unlike our district nurses, the women who have taken up this work have been women who are voluntary, and only temporary, nurses. It is true one could not expect to have professional nurses working on the district whilst nurses are wanted for the soldiers and cannot be procured; nevertheless, if after the war this organisation is really to be a success, the founders will have to recognise that women who have received a serious training as professional nurses will not be placed under the command of women who have had no serious training, and whose only title to superiority is a private income.

At the beginning of the war this was the rule in the French military hospitals; nurses who had had the advantage of the serious training given at Dr. Anna Hamilton's School in Bordeaux had to work under the Red Cross ladies, or forego the privilege of tending the sick and wounded, and those who had no private income to enable them to work without a salary had to give their skill to the patients of the civil hospitals. The F.F.N.C. nurses were paid till April of this year by the French Government, much to the astonishment of the French ladies, and the fact that they were paid made their position in the French hospitals extremely difficult. Still, in the long run, it has shown the French that labour worth having must be paid for, and that a woman can be a lady although she works for her living. On the fact that the English nurses were paid the French based their claim to be paid, and now the French military nurses, even with a very elementary training, are being paid a salary. After the war we expect in England a fight to protect the position of the trained nurse, but what will things be like in France, where the direction of nurses is entirely in the hands of male officials, and all the Red Cross ladies consider themselves trained?

Fortunately for the success of the F.F.N.C. several most competent British Jubilee Nurses joined the Society. It is true that many nurses

besides the Jubilee Nurses have been very successful and beloved by all with whom they come in contact, but the training of the Jubilee Nurse is particularly useful for the work that the F.F.N.C. Sisters have to do—*i.e.*, taking any rank in the hospital, from a charwoman to a matron and theatre sister, and doing the most difficult dressings with nothing to do them with. What a marvellous training for any pioneer work!

Some time ago a French *Médecin Chef*, writing to the D. Générale of the F.F.N.C., asked for an extra nurse, and "with special training." The D.G., not understanding what he meant, replied that all the nurses of the F.F.N.C. were "fully trained." He explained, however, that by special training he meant the kind of nurse who was not "frightened of a broom," and the D. Générale at once understood he meant a Jubilee Nurse. But not only the French soldiers and doctors have discovered the Jubilee Nurse, but the civil population have now made the acquaintance of the warm heart and competence of the ex-Jubilee worker, and those who have time, and when they are slack, have begun working in the districts round their hospitals. A Scotch Jubilee Nurse, who is working with another nurse without district experience, tells me the poor have discovered her, and it is to her they come for consultation, not to her friend. "It doesn't matter," said she, "wherever we go the poor find us out." The Jubilee Nurse is like a magnet to the poor; she just loves them and cannot keep away from them. There is her "Jubilee manner," too. She has such constant training in tact, in getting her own way without offending the beloved poor. What a privilege to be thus the trusted friend of the poor, yet what a responsibility! The District Nurse has a power greater than the doctor and the priest. How is she going to use that power in the future? Is she going to stamp out for ever the slavish condition in which woman has so far been subjected to the "lord and master," or is she to teach woman her proper value and position? Judging from the number of Jubilee Nurses who swelled the ranks of the Suffrage Societies, we feel confident for the future.

The graves of the British soldiers in France are to be tended by women from home. Twenty girls will leave England this week to work as gardeners in the military cemeteries in France. Some of the cemeteries are elaborately planned already, but others are in a very rough state, and it is intended that all should be made as beautiful as possible.

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