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## EDITORIAL.

### SETTLING DOWN.

With the cessation of hostilities in the world-wide conflict, and the progress made in the definition of Peace Terms, thousands of nurses are thinking of the future, and what their prospects are of securing congenial work when they are demobilized at an early date. A certain number are assured of posts kept open for them, to which they can return; others who belonged to co-operations of nurses and who have loyally paid their percentage during their leave of absence, realising that the connection and business built up with so much care must be kept together during the war, now find the benefit of their action. There is work ready for them when, after sufficient rest, they are able to take it up again. Others who, quite oblivious to any considerations except their own quite natural desire to nurse the sick and wounded, severed their connection with the societies to which they belonged, regardless of whether it was convenient to spare them at the time, provided they could get their own way, may now be beginning to realize that, even from a purely selfish point of view, their action was ill-considered and unwise, and be looking forward to the prospects of securing good posts on their return home, with some misgiving.

We do not think that for most of those who have worked abroad during the war, whether they have posts to return to or not, the process of settling down will be an easy one. War is horrible, and the strain upon all who have shared its perils—combatants, medical officers, and nurses—has been immense. But to many nurses it has brought an enlarged vision, the interest and pleasure of foreign travel, the enjoyment of residence in a foreign country, and of acquaintance with people of other

nationalities. In addition, there has been the stimulus of knowing that their work was a necessary factor in winning the war, and the privilege of nursing those whose heroism attained a world-wide renown, while their own work as nurses received a recognition and appreciation never before accorded to it. They have, in fact, as the late Lord Kitchener reminded the Army in South Africa at the close of the war in that country, tasted the "salt of life."

To pick up the threads once again at home in the narrow, if absorbing, environment of the hospital or infirmary ward, or in charge of a private case—perhaps more or less chronic—will require some determination and self-discipline. Those who have never been far from home, do not know the joy of travel or its educative value; but, to most who have had this experience, the impulse, on settling down at home again to the ordinary routine, comes at times so strongly as hardly to be denied; to find some sphere of work which will take them far afield, and afford them an opportunity of seeing more of the world, of the beauties of nature, and the treasures of art.

A proportion of the nurses who have youth and health may find their opportunity in the various openings in the great Indian Empire, and other Dominions beyond the seas. The urgent need in connection with foreign missions may appeal to and absorb some others, and it is fortunate at the present time that we are on the eve of the establishment of a Ministry of Health, for the stimulus which this will give to the inauguration of health schemes by local public authorities, in connection with which the services of nurses will be required, will no doubt give to many nurses the opportunity of using their nursing skill as Social Service workers for the good of the community.

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