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## EDITORIAL.

**"Let all who will man the boat and save the nation."—The Prime Minister in the House of Commons.**

With the above words the Prime Minister concluded a speech of primary importance in the House of Commons on Monday last. He told the House that the cardinal feature of the moment is that we are not paying our way until we increase production in this country, and, if we do not do that now, we shall be driven by the stern scourge of events later on to reduce lower than ever the standard of living in this country. He could see no alternative except quitting the country for which the people fought so grandly for four years.

The appeal of Mr. Lloyd George to the nation is in short an appeal to patriotism, just as surely as that which was made five years ago, and which evoked so splendid a response. But there is this difference. During the years of war only a section of the nation could take a direct share in its defence. Now every man, woman and child can do so. For the exercise of thrift, of industry, of frugality are virtues which all may practise, and it is by such means that we shall in national, as in personal, matters first bring our expenditure within our income and then create a balance on the right side.

At first sight it may seem that we, as nurses, have little to do with the increase of production, which is a matter for politicians, but consideration may prove otherwise.

The Prime Minister said, and said truly: "Everyone is suffering from the terrible strain of the war. Nerves are jagged and sore, and I am not sure that we make sufficient allowance for it, and for the nervous re-action.

There is no surer sign of ruffled nerves than the general disposition to grumble and grouse about everything and everybody." People in that condition are certainly not in the best position to increase output, and where the tension is great, may even cease productive labour altogether. Here, therefore, is a bit of work, and congenial work, ready to our hand—to help to build up the health of the nation so that it may be physically fit to cope with the gigantic task which confronts it, and that needless troubles may not arise because of the fret and fraying of jangled nerves, and of the physical and mental strain through which it has passed. To attain that end is a worthy aim for our best endeavour.

Then, if we are honest, we must most of us own that there are directions in which we could and should economise. If every member of the nursing staff of a hospital cultivated a sensitive conscience as to the prevention of waste, considerable economy would be effected which, multiplied many times, would result in substantial national saving. In the use of coal, of gas, of linen, of surgical stores, economy could often be effected without impairing efficiency. It should be a matter of honour and patriotism with each one, from the highest to the lowest in a hospital, to practise economy wherever possible, and any extravagance should be regarded as "bad form."

The happy and intimate relations usually existing between the nursing profession and the public gives us many opportunities of advising those who trust us. We can show how we "must cut down needless expenditure and must increase production by every legitimate endeavour. . . . With a clear eye and steady hand and a willing heart we will row through into calmer and bluer waters. . . . Let all who will man the boat and save the nation."

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