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EDITORIAL.

**THE JOINT COUNCIL OF THE B.R.C.S. AND
THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM.**

It will be remembered that on the outbreak of war in 1914 there were two corporations authorized to engage in relief work among the sick and wounded men of His Majesty's Forces, namely, the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

In order to co-ordinate the activities of these two bodies, and to avoid waste and overlapping, it was found expedient to "pool" their funds and their efforts, and what is known as the Joint War Committee was formed, with a Joint Finance Committee, under which the voluntary work of relieving the sufferings of His Majesty's Forces has been carried out during the last six years.

Since the Armistice the Joint War Committee has been engaged in carrying on certain of its war departments, including—

The care of the sick and wounded men of His Majesty's Forces, whether still on the sick list or demobilised.

Such care as may still be necessary for those who have been prisoners of war.

Assistance to orthopædic clinics, and curative posts for the treatment of pensioners.

Home service ambulance organization.

In a statement setting out these facts Queen Alexandra, President of the British Red Cross Society, and the Duke of Connaught, Grand Prior of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England, express the view that there are also other branches of work which can usefully be undertaken in time of peace by the Order of St. John and the British Red Cross Society, such as :

The care of those suffering from tuberculosis, having regard in the first place to sailors and soldiers, whether they have contracted the disease on active service or not.

Assistance, financial and otherwise, to the Voluntary Civil Hospitals, in view of the strain put upon these hospitals by the war.

Work parties to provide the necessary garments, &c., for hospitals and health institutions.

Child welfare work.

Assistance where required in all branches of nursing, health and welfare work, ancillary to the Ministry of Health.

As the Joint War Committee was created only for work in time of war the two corporations have now, by a formal agreement, established a Joint Council, on which both bodies have equal representation. This Council possesses under the old charter of the Order of St. John, and the extended charter of the British Red Cross Society, power to act in all matters connected with "the improvement of health, the prevention of disease, and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world."

For the branches of work mentioned in the first category the Joint War Committee will continue to provide the necessary funds, wholly or in part, but an appeal is made for money for all the other work of the Joint Council, and an income of £1,000,000 per annum is aimed at to be distributed in the form of grants, supplementary to the individual efforts of the hospitals, and the other welfare agencies. If the confidence of trained nurses is to be secured they must be assured that they will be given the professional recognition to which they are entitled, and that the responsible charge, under the medical profession, of all branches of nursing, health and welfare work will be placed in their hands.

This the Joint War Committee omitted to do during the War.

Any new form of organisation set up where the services of professional nursing is indispensable should be controlled by a special Nursing Department, supervised by an experienced Nurse Administrator. This plan is proving of great value in connection with the American Red Cross, which also hopes to extend its activities in the field of preventive work and civil hospital relief.

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