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EDITORIALS.

EMPIRE DAY.

There are no more loyal subjects of the King than the Trained Nurses of this country, and there are none to whom Empire Day makes a closer appeal, for duty calls them to the farthest bounds of Empire, following the Flag wherever it is planted, and it is theirs therefore in a special degree to uphold the Empire's honour and prestige. They will therefore do well to take to heart the words with which the Prime Minister concluded his broadcast message on Empire Day:—

"We who have inherited this Empire are proud of it, and it is right that we should be proud. With our pride there should mingle gratitude to those who have gone before us, by whose efforts this Empire has grown. In a world still suffering from the shock of war the British Empire stands firm as a great force for good. Let us, then, to-day, bear the Empire in our minds and in our prayers. It invites and requires some service of us all. It stands in the sweep of every wind, by the wash of every sea, a witness to that which the spirit of confidence and brotherhood can accomplish in the world. It is a spiritual inheritance which we hold in trust, not only for its members, but for all the nations which surround it. Let us see to it that we hand it on to our successors with untarnished glory."

THE INFLUENCE OF HARMONIOUS SURROUNDINGS.

Of all the influences which are factors in the daily life of an individual, of a community, and of a nation, those of harmony and beauty are amongst the most potent.

The loveliness of Nature, the beauty of architecture, of pictures, of form, of colour, and the harmony of music and poetry have magic to educate, soothe, and charm our restless spirits, and, conversely, the iron enters into the souls of those who, naturally possessed of a love of harmony, beauty, law and order, are forced to live in surroundings which are sordid and inharmonious.

It is difficult to realise the oppression of spirit, the damping of genius, resulting from ugliness, and discord of environment, and the restrictions imposed on the mentality of the average individual thereby. In an ideal State miles of drab and dingy suburbs, and jerry-built houses will, no doubt, be prohibited, as wronging the individual, and therefore as an offence against the community, and town planning of architectural merit be required.

There can be no keener delight than to get into close

touch with the beauty of Nature, no greater refreshment of spirit or rest of mind or body. For this reason, travel both at home and abroad is among the most enjoyable of recreations.

In this connection the International Council of Nurses has brought visits to foreign countries within reach of many who would otherwise not have enjoyed their pleasure and educative value.

There are many nurses looking forward with keen anticipation to the forthcoming Conference convened by the I.C.N. in Geneva, not only for the value of the Conference itself, but because of the accessibility from Geneva of some of the loveliest parts of Switzerland, and the ease with which extensions to include visits to these can be arranged. Visits which will not only be sheer joy at the time, but afterwards in retrospect, when we recall the beauty of lakes, rivers and mountains, the glowing sunrises and sunsets, equalled only in wonder and delight of the moonlight on majestic snow-clad peaks. These, once seen, must remain an abiding and inspiring influence.

The life of a nurse brings her into frequent contact with pain and sadness, poverty and sordidness, and therefore harmony and beauty are especially necessary to her if she is to keep mentally equable, and a restful personality to those among whom she works. Much has been done by hospital authorities of recent years to make nurses' residences, homes in fact as well as in name, and we are often struck, on visiting such homes, with the pains which have been expended by committees and matrons not only to provide for the adequate housing and comfort of the nursing staff, but in arranging colour schemes of walls and furnishings which create an atmosphere of harmony and repose.

Lastly, to those who derive inspiration from the dignity and beauty of their surroundings, the Headquarters of the British College of Nurses at 39, Portland Place, London, W., which are to be on view to Fellows and Members on June 9th and 10th, will, we believe, be a revelation to them of stateliness, order and harmony, which will enter into their lives as an uplifting influence, bringing with it increased happiness, and capacity for work. They will realise that the College will emphasise the honour due to the Profession of Nursing and will point to it with pride to the public at large, and to visitors from Overseas, as the embodiment of their aspirations.

For themselves, they will find rest and recreation in their attractive Club Room, with its noble proportions, charm of shape, colouring and furnishings, and that beauty spoken of by Michael Angelo when he said "beauty is the elimination of superfluities."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)