

EDITORIAL.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

Once again as the Christmas season approaches comes the pleasure of conveying through the columns of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING our heartiest good wishes to its readers for a happy Christmas and New Year. The JOURNAL carries no formal message to its friends, but in each of the five continents it travels to convey to those united in the bonds of professional and personal friendship and who are well known to one another, so many of whom have but recently met in close communion at the meetings of the International Congress of Nurses in London in July. These have now returned to their own countries, realising more than ever before how strong is the bond which unites the nurses of the world, who are inspired by the same ideals, are confronted by the same problems, and the less forward of whom are strengthened by the knowledge that the difficulties they are now experiencing are difficulties which their colleagues in other countries have experienced and have overcome, and who realise that what others have accomplished they too can achieve.

It is with real joy that we have received so many messages from all parts of the world testifying to the benefit and pleasure and inspiration the writers have experienced in attending the International Congress of Nurses in London.

It is indeed somewhat amazing that the nurses of 32 nations should have proved themselves so solidly united in a common purpose, and, in spite of the differences which rend the world at this time, should be animated by friendship and good will. Surely the good will of the nurses, and the influence which they possess, must have some appreciable effect in this direction.

Given good will "it shall follow as the night the day" that peace will ultimately be attained. It is because the nations fear one another, suspect one another, mistrust the motives of one another, see sinister designs even in harmless actions, that an atmosphere of tension is produced which endangers the peace of the world.

Certain it is that, at the present time, if we, as a nation, desire to maintain peace we must make it clear that while we desire to respect the rights of other nations we are effectively ready to defend our Empire and its possessions if attacked. England expects every man to do his duty, and the duty of an Englishman, as he conceives it, is to defend his country, and to protect its defenceless citizens, its women and children. He, therefore, demands that his country shall be placed in a position to enable him to successfully resist any encroachment on its legitimate rights.

We may leave to the Government of this Empire, whose duty it is, to so order its defences that they shall command the respect of the world. That is the best guarantee of peace within our borders. For nurses, in this connection, their duty is clear—to endeavour so to develop an atmosphere of good will that at no distant date we may see the dawn of that day when peace shall encompass the world.

May the nurses, united in the International Council of Nurses, help to hasten its coming.

VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.

The interest of the late Sir Frederick Milner in disabled ex-Service men is well known, and no more appropriate memorial to this distinguished soldier could be established than the Fund for the extension of Village Settlements, which have done so much for disabled ex-Service men now proposed.

The work which it is hoped to accomplish is envisaged in a letter issued in connection with the "Village Settlements Pictorial," the National organ of the Village Settlements, issued from 16, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1, and signed by Field-Marshal Sir William R. Birdwood, Bt., Sir Humphry Rolleston, Bt., and General Sir Reginald Wingate, Bt., which is as follows:

"In the years since the Great War a wonderful work has been done by Village Settlements. They have succoured ex-Service men so badly disabled in war that they could never again hope to take their place in the competitive world of industry. And they have given a new chance in life to those—ex-soldiers and civilians alike—who have been stricken with the dread disease of tuberculosis.

"Medical treatment has been given to these unfortunate people. Work and wages have been provided for them. Homes, once broken up, have been reconstituted, and the disabled have regained the comfort and independence of normal family life.

"All this has been achieved at the splendid institutions at Enham and Papworth . . .

"To-day a new era is opening and a new task beginning. So beneficial has this work proved that it has been decided to extend its scope. Without in any way slackening their efforts on behalf of the war-disabled and the tuberculous, therefore, the village settlements will open their doors, as soon as their resources permit to those incapacitated through sickness, accident and disease, wheresoever and howsoever caused. . . .

"Such a decision entails a tremendous responsibility and must necessarily involve considerable expenditure, mostly of a capital nature . . . The settlements have many generous friends, many loyal helpers. But they need many thousands more.

"We venture to think that after you have learned of these great institutions, and of the still greater crusade on which they are embarking, you, too, will give us your help. We shall be grateful and glad to welcome your aid."

The time of this moving appeal is opportune, and we hope that many will include in their Christmas gifts a liberal donation in response to it, as a thankoffering for the great gift of health.

It is impossible to deal too sympathetically with the men disabled, and often in pain, who willingly offered their lives, and suffered permanently in so doing, to defend their beloved country, their women-kind and children from the devastation and horrors which are the accompaniment of invasion. Let us ever remember that there are many of these sufferers still in our midst, and that we have the opportunity of showing our gratitude for a debt we can never repay. And next let us strive to help those who are incapacitated to regain the comfort and independence of normal family life. It is a noble ideal and it is our part to help to make the ideal a reality.

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