

# Doubling Our Efforts<sup>1</sup>

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NOW THAT THE WAR is upon us, what may be the rôle you may be asked to play? There never was a time when the nurse could be of greater value to her country. The demands of the armed forces have already decreased the ranks of trained nurses left in any community, and it will take the most intelligent planning to make the number of nurses remaining in any given place suffice. Some of you will doubtless enter the service of the government in either the armed forces or the United States Public Health Service. But for those who remain let it be clear that they too serve equally in this great ordeal. Only when the home front is happy and satisfied can an army attack with the confidence and "élan" necessary for victory. The private in the ranks who knows that his mother, wife, or sweetheart is adequately cared for at home is given a stimulus and morale which cannot be manufactured or bought in the open market. Do not underestimate your own value. . . .

And let us not be deceived because the war news seems a little better. The American people, who are naturally optimistic and already misled by unjustifiably hopeful news on the radio and in our newspapers, are beginning to think we are winning the war and the end is in sight. This is now leading to defection in the ranks of civilian defense. Air raid wardens are less conscious of their tasks and some are resigning. The cold facts are—we haven't won a battle yet! England wasn't bombed until she had been at war ten months!

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from address given at the commencement exercises of the School of Nursing, Springfield Hospital, Springfield, Massachusetts, June 5, 1942.

<sup>2</sup> On July 16 Dr. Cutler wrote, "I am off to war."

Now, as never before, we of the medical and nursing professions must stand as a power to keep this essential activity alive and ready for the emergency. We cannot say when disaster will come any more than could the residents of Pearl Harbor or Tokyo, but we must not underestimate our enemy and we must be prepared lest the women and children of this Commonwealth suffer through our carelessness. Every nurse and every doctor who is not serving his country in the military forces should devote a part of each day to this grave and important responsibility. . . .

Now is the time for you to become the trained leaders of your sex! In England the example of the women . . . has been a bright stimulus for all. Women have shown their resilience to fear of air raids and fear of invasion. Their toil exceeds that of the men, for many replacing their men in industry arise at five o'clock, look after four or five children, and then work eight to ten hours a day in industry. And with our own people the same has held true . . . .

We who stay at home must not let our fighting men down. It is disconcerting to one who went through the last war and may see active service again to hear complaints about taxes, limits to automobile travel, and food restrictions. Until we duplicate the hardships of our soldiers and sailors, until we spend as many sleepless nights as they do, until we experience the all-out effort of a military attack, we cannot do otherwise than pile in days and nights of hard work, doubling our effort to make up for the loss of those who have gone to serve us in other lands.