

action arrives. We therefore venture to ask you to be so good as to make it known through your columns that Her Royal Highness's scheme does not involve the assumption by the Royal British Nurses' Association of the functions of an institution for the supply of Nurses to the public; that the special committee of the Association does offer to act as a central means of communication between sanitary authorities and Nurses in all parts of the country, who may desire to join in the common effort to meet the expected epidemic; that the suggestions relating to the provision which should be made for Nurses by the local authorities in the matter of remuneration, and in other respects, were formulated in conference with the council of the Society of Medical Officers of Health, and have been issued to sanitary authorities only; and that it is understood that the expenses incurred in the employment of Nurses will not only be chargeable to the rates, and therefore not be incident on individuals, but also will be payable direct to the institutions to which they may be affiliated, or to the Nurses themselves in cases in which they may happen to be unattached.

We are, Sir, your obedient Servants,
 W. BEZLY THORNE, M.D. } Hon. Secs.
 GRACE GORDON, }

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THE Duke of WESTMINSTER has lately paid a well deserved tribute to the skilful nursing which is now in force in some London Poor Law Infirmaries. The occasion was the Annual Meeting of the Northern Workhouse Nursing Association at Chester. The object of the Association is to train and promote the employment of experienced Nurses for the care of the sick poor. The Duke said "nothing could be finer, more efficient, and more satisfactory than the London Workhouse Hospitals, and the Nursing was admirable."

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THE *Westminster Gazette*, on the 20th instant, had the following grim commentary on His Grace's remarks:—

"The regulations of the St. Giles's Workhouse appear to be capable of improvement. An inmate of the infirmary was charged in one of the police-courts on Saturday with 'refractory conduct.' The man was suffering from consumption, and his refractory conduct consisted in objecting to turn out at four o'clock in the morning, and sit at an open window while his bed was made. The police-magistrate hazarded the opinion that 'a man suffering from chronic consumption should not be made to leave his bed at four o'clock every morning.' The medical officer did not quarrel with this dictum as a matter of medical opinion, but explained that the procedure was 'according to the regulations.' The case well illustrates the task which the Royal Commission has before it of suggesting how "the regulations" may be brought a little more into accord with common sense and common humanity."

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IN connection with the scheme for Nursing for Europeans in India, the *Times of India* says:—

"The Bombay Presidency may well feel some modest pride in the fact that when enquiries were made as to

the best method on which some scheme should be worked for supplying Nurses up-country to patients of all classes and professions, no better could be found or invented than that on which the Poona Mofussil Nursing Association is already being carried on. Our readers have from time to time been made acquainted with what that organisation is doing and aiming at. Its system, if imitated and extended all over India, would result in the formation of numerous district committees, of which medical men and other influential persons should be members, which would aim at the enrolment of every European, of whatever class or profession, from highest to lowest, as members of the 'Up-country Nursing Association,' receive members' subscriptions, and arrange for suitable accommodation and employment for the Nurses in the intervals between their cases. Again, if the Poona Mofussil Association be taken as the model, the new association will doubtless imitate that body by planting our Nurses in small numbers at first (until their funds admit of more), with existing centres, such as sisterhoods, Hospitals, and the like. The discipline and selection of the Nurses would be handed over to the Sisters or other responsible persons, whilst the district committees would organise the administration of the local funds, and settle upon the sliding scale of fees to be charged to patients, in proportion to their means.

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The home committee in England would decide on the reports of the local committees in India as to where the greatest demand for Nurses arose, and where the local subscriptions most needed to be supplemented from the home fund. This fund would have to be raised in England by appeals addressed especially to the people at home who are interested in India, and to whom the support of such an Association would seem more or less a matter of sympathetic obligation. There will always be in India, especially in large stations, at the seats of railway works, and at European factory centres where the poorer class of Europeans congregate, large numbers of people who are quite unable to pay the full rate of a Nurse's fees, and yet who can well afford to give a small yearly subscription in time of health, which should entitle them to the services of a Nurse in time of sickness, for which they would be charged in proportion to their means. In some cases no payment over and above the yearly subscription would be charged. It is to supply the inevitable deficit caused by the Nursing of such cases that appeals to present and past Anglo-Indians and others will become necessary.

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But, in our opinion, if the scheme is to be sound and lasting, it must be as nearly as possible self-supporting, and this must depend on the extent to which English residents in India avail themselves of the offer of membership. If well-chosen local committees are formed all over India, and money is economised at the outset, as is the case with the Poona Nursing Association, by the utilisation of existing machinery where possible; and above all, if every English resident in India, from the Member of Council down to the mechanic (to quote our correspondent's phrase) will enrol himself on arrival in India, as a matter of course, as a subscribing member of the Association, we shall have in our midst a fine self-supporting co-operative organisation tending to the preservation of the life and health of English people in India."

S. G.

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