

in relation to the care of the sick and wounded, surely it would be seemly that a trained Superintendent of Nursing, should form part of such a Committee. We must not forget that in criticising the condition of affairs, the *nursing* in the South African Campaign stands condemned from numerous sources, many of a private nature, and that in consequence the work of nurses at the front has been impugned and discredited, but the nursing profession cannot be justly held responsible for any failure of a system of nursing in which they are excluded from all authority. Without authority there can be no responsibility and in consequence we nurses repudiate as unjust, any blame for the present deplorable condition of affairs in the crude and obsolete organisation of the Army Nursing Service, and Army Nursing Reserve.

It would be well, therefore, for each person present to use what influence they possess to interest Members of Parliament in this question. The Matrons' Council has already taken steps to bring this important departure before certain influential members of the House.

We consider the remedy is simple, and what we nurses ask for, in all Governmental offices dealing with the sick, is power to deal effectively with our professional affairs in so far as they relate to the care of our brave defenders, our sailors and soldiers, by the appointment of a trained Nurse Superintendent, who, in conjunction with the Medical Director, shall be in a position to initiate and make effective a system of nursing as perfect as possible.

THE PRESIDENT (Miss Isla Stewart): There is no doubt that this is what is needed, but it means no less than that we are asking for the recognition of nursing as a profession. At present it is not recognised even as a skilled calling. In every way this reform is desirable, for not only is it undoubtedly due, that the value of trained nursing should be recognised, but, it is undeniable that women are best governed by women, and that discipline is most perfect when enforced by women. Nurses like it and take kindly to it. Moreover, the valuable work done by women in raising nursing to its present standard of efficiency deserves recognition.

This so far they have not attained either in the Army or Navy. In naval hospitals, I believe, that even the control of the linen is in the hands of a man sent down from the Admiralty for this purpose.

On a nurse devolves the responsibility of carrying out orders, upon the dexterous performance of which the life of her patient often depends. Surely the profession composed of such women may be entrusted with some measure of self-government. Again, the nursing in South Africa is being assailed, but I must point out that the nurses have no trained executive officer over them, and consequently they have no opportunity of making a complaint about matters which appear to them to need rectifying, and no official channel through which they can communicate with the home authorities, for neither here or in South Africa have they any duly appointed and officially recognized head.

Mrs. BOND (United States): What is the position of Miss Norman, the Superintendent of Nursing at Netley with regard to the selection of Army Nurses? Are not the Army Reserve nurses selected by her, and would she not be their official head?

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK: The question asked by Mrs. Bond is a very pertinent one, and proves the

anomalous condition of Army nursing affairs. Miss Norman, who is the only Lady Superintendent in the Army Nursing Service, does *not* select candidates for the Service of which she is the recognised head; candidates are selected by the Medical Department and nominated for an appointment, and Miss Norman has then to receive them for six months' probation at Netley, when presumably she has an opportunity of reporting on their suitability. Miss Norman has no seat on the Central Red Cross Committee, which has been made responsible for organizing the nursing in the South African campaign, and which is largely composed of medical men and laymen; only one trained nurse has a seat on this Committee, so that her vote of one to ten cannot be effective in giving prominence to nursing affairs. Miss Norman has, therefore, no authority whatever over the members of the Army Nursing Service Reserve.

One word more. The nursing of our sick soldiers has been referred to in the daily press as "a charitable work." As a citizen I repudiate that. The care of our sick soldiers should have no element of charity or patronage about it. Every man who serves his country is entitled to efficient medical treatment and nursing, and it is the duty of the War Office to see that he has it. Again, we nurses suffer from the same evils as working women. We want neither charity nor patronage, and we must unite in our protest against this very undesirable attitude on the part of potentates and powers.

The President then put the resolution to the meeting, which was passed unanimously and with acclamation.

Appointments.

LADY SUPERINTENDENT.

MISS ARNOLD, who has worked as a nurse amongst the poor in Cambridge, has been appointed Lady Superintendent of the Jubilee Home for District Nurses, Newmarket Road, Cambridge.

ASSISTANT MATRON.

MISS E. M. BYLES has been appointed First Assistant Matron at St. Saviour's Infirmary, East Dulwich. She was trained at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, and at St. Thomas' Hospital, and was subsequently Sister for six years in the latter institution. Miss Byles has of late acted as Second Assistant Matron at St. Saviour's Infirmary.

SISTER.

MISS E. S. CLEMENTS has been appointed Sister at the Shoreditch Infirmary. She was trained at the Mile End Infirmary, and has had experience as a Sister at the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, and at the Brook Fever Hospital, Shooter's Hill.

MISS FLORENCE M. BIRKIN has been appointed Sister at the Wakefield Infirmary. She received her training at the Marylebone Infirmary, and has since worked at the Northern Fever Hospital, and also at the Keighley Union Infirmary.

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