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Editorial.

A GREAT NATIONAL ORGANISATION.

An appeal is being issued for increased support for Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, which should meet with a widespread response. The expenses of the work of the Institute, even on its present quite inadequate scale, exceed the income by £3,000 a year, and there are at this moment fifty-three places where associations are organised, the money is provided to pay the nurses, the suffering poor are waiting to be nursed, but the Institute, for want of funds for training them, is unable to supply the nurses.

The appeal has the support of the Queen and also of Miss Nightingale, who takes a deep interest in the nursing of the poor in their own homes. Thirty years ago Miss Nightingale wrote:—

"These sick poor lose the feeling of what it is to be clean. The district nurse has to show them their room clean for once—in other words, to do it herself. Every home she has thus cleansed has always been kept so. This is her glory. She found it a pig-stye. She left it a tidy, airy room. To set these poor people going again with a sound and clean house, as well as with a sound and clean body, is about as great a benefit as can be given them—worth acres of gift and relief."

And to-day her interest in the good work is as keen as ever. From her sick bed she sends the following message:—

"Miss Nightingale sincerely hopes that Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses will succeed in enlisting national sympathy on behalf of the effort which is being made to further develop the work of nursing the sick poor in their own homes, an object which has had her warmest sympathy from the beginning."

An instance of work which could usefully be undertaken through the organisation of the Institute, did its sources permit, is midwifery amongst the poor throughout the kingdom. With its unique knowledge the Queen's Institute could usefully place

certified midwives in necessitous districts if their salaries could at the same time be guaranteed. This might also counteract one phase of the development of the work of the Institute which we have always regretted—namely, that it has in England extended recognition to County Nursing Associations maintaining insufficient nursing standards. There should be a minimum standard of efficiency for a trained nurse, and every nurse supervised by the Institute should be required to attain it. In Scotland this is the case, and in Ireland the nurses employed under Lady Dudley's Scheme in the poorest districts are all fully-trained Queen's nurses.

If midwives are employed we should prefer to see them frankly recognised as such, and not given the title of village nurse, which must inevitably lead to a regrettable lowering of standards.

The King's Hospital Fund for London has realised the most sanguine hopes of its founder. Yet its scope is comparatively small. Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute—the beneficent work of which extends to the three kingdoms—is, on the other hand, crippled in its usefulness by the inadequate financial support accorded to it. Is it because the evidence of its work cannot be demonstrated by palatial buildings, but must be sought in the homes and hearts of the poor, made brighter and better by the work and influence of Queen's nurses, that it still has to plead for £10,000 a year while willing donors of £100,000 to the King's Fund are almost common? The Queen's Jubilee Institute can hardly be too richly endowed, for its opportunities of service are unlimited. It is to be hoped that the present appeal will have the effect of directing increased attention to its good work which has in the past been too much overshadowed by more showy charities.

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