

Nurses' Missionary League.

On Saturday last two Valedictory Meetings were held at University Hall, Gordon Square, W.C., in connection with the Nurses' Missionary League, to take leave of six nurses who are taking up missionary work abroad.

The afternoon gathering took the form of an "At Home," the hostess being Miss Oldham. About thirty nurses were present, besides many friends of the League. Conversation and music, both vocal and instrumental, occupied most of the time, and an address was given by Dr. White, of Persia. He dwelt first of all on the urgent necessity for mission work among the Mohammedans in many lands, both because of their own needs, and the number of heathen who are being converted to Mohammedanism every year. He pointed out that for pioneer work medical missions are almost the only method of overcoming opposition and obtaining a hearing. He then described how his own work had begun at Yezd, when he had no hospital, and could not even get a house in which to live; and how gradually patients had come, and confidence had been established, till at last a house had been given him for a hospital, and the work has grown till now there is a small Women's Hospital and a spacious Hospital with 88 beds.

At the evening meeting the chair was taken by Colonel Oldham, and the first speaker was Dr. Eleanor Dodson, of the Women's Hospital, Dera Ghazi Khan, where Nurse I. Frodsham, a Bart's trained nurse, who went out last year, is working. Dera Ghazi Khan is a city of 30,000 inhabitants, in the extreme north-west of the Punjab, on the borders of Afghanistan and Beloochistan, and the hospital draws its patients from the wild tribes of those regions.

Dr. Dodson described her difficulties in training native women to help her in the hospital, whose idea was that surgical work was very dirty, and so they considered that they should wash their hands after and not before an operation. Again, with the best intentions, one took the instruments Dr. Dodson had carefully prepared for an operation, and was found cleaning them with earth to make them bright. Later, more successfully, the doctor took younger girls, but longed for a trained nurse to teach them, as with the responsibility of treating in-patients and out-patients, and performing serious operations the work was almost overpowering.

Miss Frodsham, who now trains the native probationers, recently wrote to Dr. Dod-

son that she had no idea the Indian character was so inspiring. She considered the probationers quite up to the standard of those at home.

After Dr. Dodson's most interesting and instructive address, the nurses who are shortly leaving England each said a few words. They were Miss N. G. Postance, trained at the Royal Infirmary, Hull, proceeding to Hok Chiang, S. China, who spoke of the terrible lives of the women in the East, and the responsibility towards them of English women who have freedom in their own lives. She asked those present for their prayers, their sympathy, their help, and most of all for themselves for the work. There was terrible need for nurses abroad, while in England there were so many, they did not all know where to find employment. She was followed by Miss V. K. Bestall, trained at the General Infirmary, Leeds, proceeding to Mombasa, E. Africa; Miss E. Stinson, trained at the Dunedin General Hospital, New Zealand, proceeding to Fuh-Kien, S. China, who said that the question for nurses to consider in regard to foreign work was not "Shall I go?" but "Dare I stay at home?" and Miss Helena Mathieson, trained at Croydon Infirmary, and afterwards a Queen's Nurse, proceeding to Cæsarea, Asia Minor, who said how difficult it had been to give up her district work as she "loved it very much." She asked others to respond to the call for foreign service.

Dr. Ruby Glanville, one of the first members of the Executive Committee of the League, who is also shortly proceeding to India, spoke briefly. She reminded the members of the League that they might help on its aims by interesting probationers in missionary work. There were many who had not made up their minds what they were going to do at the end of their three years' training, whose thoughts might be directed to foreign mission work. Dr. Glanville also spoke to those who longed to go, but to whom the way seemed closed. That had been her own case for some time, and she had felt as if she could not go to a missionary meeting, it hurt so fearfully. She further said she was appalled at the few nurses who were going into the foreign field. The first impulse of a nurse's life was to help suffering wherever she saw it. At home, whether they were Matrons, Sisters, or Staff Nurses, people were ready and wanting to step into their shoes, their places could be filled at once. In the foreign mission field there was needless suffering and death for lack of their skilled services.

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