

White Coolies*.

By Betty Jeffreys.

THIS IS THE story of some of the nurses who served in the Australian Army Nursing Service, now the Royal Australian Nursing Corps. Sister Betty Jeffreys gives a first-hand chronicle of the experiences of some who were taken prisoner by the Japanese.

Apart from the physical suffering, the mental torture and agonising fear and dread of what the Nipponese might do to them was a constant nightmare!

The experiences of Sister Vivien Bullwinkle (sole woman survivor of the Banka Island massacre) and her behaviour and ability to keep morale at the highest level, calls for the admiration of the world.

Apart from the terrors of war, they were menaced by malaria, scab typhus and other tropical diseases.

To quote the late Field-Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey: "A Magnificent Service"!

D. B.

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Sessional Meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

Future of the Health Visitor.

Revise Training Methods Says University Tutor.

IDEAL CANDIDATE DEFINED.

WE HAVE PLEASURE in publishing the following opinion on the shortage of suitable recruits for Health Visitors in connection with the education and training of Health Visitors.

A prophecy that it might be necessary to undertake a radical re-organisation of the existing methods of training health visitors was made by Miss P. E. O'Connell, of Southampton University, speaking at a sessional meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute held in London on Wednesday, July 14th.

The speaker said the student who proposed following this vocation should be pleasant and attractive, trained to quick thinking, possess a clear but sympathetic voice, have a sense of humour and, at the same time, should not easily be discouraged.

She queried if the General Certificate of Education was the best criterion of educational aptitude and ability in student health visitors. She did not favour the exclusion from training of candidates who had not the advantage of secondary school education, provided they had an intelligent outlook upon life.

Miss O'Connell declared that the time was opportune for a revision of the training required for Health Visitors as past methods, in her view, had been uneconomical in both time and women power.

The shortage of suitable recruits made it imperative to carry out as many duties as possible through the medium of one worker. She envisaged the Health Visitor as the "basic medico-social worker." "If she is to qualify as such," she added, "her training will be strenuous, both academically and practically."

"More Interested in Hands than Head."

Doctors' Attitude to Health Visitors Criticised.

MANY HARASSED DOCTORS were more interested in the Health Visitor's hands than in her head, said Miss J. M. Akester, Superintendent of Health Visitors and School

Nurses, Leeds, at a London sessional meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute on Wednesday, July 14th.

She was speaking of the necessity of establishing effective co-operation between health visitors and general practitioners.

Miss Akester declared that while coffee, tea and sherry parties, conferences and "pep" talks had their value, true co-operation could not be obtained by "a vague feeling of goodwill at a party."

She criticised those local authorities who expected health visitors to spend hours treating minor ailments, and added that perhaps the most time wasting of all her duties were those generally allocated to her in the school health service.

"Spending the afternoon weighing babies may be pleasant enough," went on the speaker, "but not surely one for which four and a half years' preparation is necessary."

Miss Akester said that the present-day health visitor must concern herself with the minds and morals of her families, with neglected children, delinquent youth, unsuccessful marriage, physical and mental handicaps and old age, as well as with normal family life.

Speaking of Health Visitors of the future Miss Akester said: "The difficulties might well daunt her, but change is a stimulant and each new problem a spur to enthusiasm."

We feel that in relation to the opinion that "spending the afternoon weighing babies may be pleasant enough, but not surely one for which four and a half years' preparation is necessary," surely it is not the actual weighing that requires the skill of the nurse, but the guidance she is able to give concerning the condition it may indicate.

Report from Delegate to the National Council of Women of Great Britain.

July 6th—9th at Edinburgh.

THREE HUNDRED WOMEN come to Edinburgh to talk! So said our daily paper, and talk they did. But just to leaven the lump of controversy various social interludes were interspersed.

On the evening of Tuesday the 6th, the Edinburgh Branch entertained us to a Ceilidh in which Mr. Bannerman as Comper or "Man of the House" in traditional manner called upon various members to perform. A very special item was a song in Bengali by an Indian lady. Songs in Gaelic and English followed Bagpipe Tunes, and the Edinburgh Choir gave a delightful performance. A Buffet Supper provided excellent refreshment.

Wednesday morning service in St. Giles Cathedral was conducted by the Bishop of Edinburgh. The address was given by the Rev. W. White Anderson and the lesson was read by Mrs. Freeman, President of N.C.W.

Afterwards in the Assembly Room we were welcomed by the Rt. Hon. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh (John G. Banks, C.B.E.). Mrs. Freeman gave the presidential address, and the first Session opened.

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