

The Colonial Nursing Association.

IN accordance with our desire to give further particulars respecting the Colonial Nursing Association, Mrs. Frances Piggott, the hon. secretary, has personally favoured us with a few details that cannot fail to be of value to those who feel interest in what is going on in "Greater Britain."

This proposed organisation for supplying Nurses for private patients throughout the Colonies is as yet in its infancy, but if the Association meets with the support that is hoped for, it promises to become one of very great National importance.

As wife of the Chief Judge of Mauritius, Mrs. Piggott was, during her stay out here, in a position to ascertain the urgent need for skilled nursing felt by resident Europeans, and the privations they suffered through not being able to rely upon anything beyond native help to nurse cases of ordinary illness, monthly nursing, and cases of accident, as well as in times of epidemic.

Such privations and sufferings were severely felt by new-comers and strangers arriving in the locality, and attacked by malarial or other fevers before they had time to make friends who could give help and advice in such emergencies. The same privations and sufferings that Mrs. Piggott describes in Mauritius are necessarily felt in other Crown Colonies not yet sufficiently established, too isolated or too poor to have any organisation for supplying trained Nurses.

When one thinks how very recently we in England have been able to procure trained Nurses for private patients, when one knows that even now comparatively few of the Nursing Institutions throughout the country can guarantee that the Nurses they send out are sufficiently trained, one can better realise that in the movement to supply private Nurses to our Colonies abroad, the Association has to begin at the beginning, and to face a very large undertaking.

Individual efforts have been made in British communities to supply trained Nurses, but without sufficient organisation to meet exceptional cases, to provide for unexpected change of Nurses—owing to failure of health—and other difficulties attaching to unsettled localities. Such efforts have, except in the larger Colonies, not met with permanent success.

Ultimately the Association proposes to be self-supporting, and there is every reason why it should become so. It is not a charitable Institution, in the sense of giving gratuitously the services of skilled Nurses to patients unable to make payment, but it may be described as charitable and philanthropic too, in the sense that it is to provide care and nursing to sick persons who are able and willing to pay for such services, but who, without some central organisation, cannot obtain such care for love or money.

The Colonial Nursing Association is to form this central organisation, and any Colony or community abroad, applying for a trained private Nurse, will be expected to organise a representative local committee, to raise such a fund as may, together with the Nurse's fees, provide for her maintenance during her term of engagement, and for her travelling expenses.

Mr. Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, has recommended the extension of the C.N.A. to the following Colonies:—British Honduras, British New Guinea, British Guiana, Barbadoes, Bermuda, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Ceylon, Cyprus, Dominica, Fiji, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Gambia, Gold Coast, Grenada,

Hong Kong, St. Helena, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Labun, St. Lucia, Leeward Islands, Lagos, Malta, Sierra Leone, Tobago, Trinidad, Straits Settlements, Seychelles, St. Vincent, Zululand.

With regard to the project, so far as it affects the Nurses, very little is as yet determined on. Mrs. Piggott is herself disposed to think that quite young Nurses would be unsuited for the work they might be called upon to do and to face the responsibilities involved. Preference would be given to Nurses of longer experience, not under thirty years of age, and preferably to gentlewomen, if they could be obtained.

The only weak point in the whole scheme, so far as we have been able to gather, is the uncertainty as to the amount of training that will be demanded from the Nurses sent out to these Colonies to do private nursing. Mrs. Piggott expressed herself in favour of choosing as Nurses a class of nice, amiable women-attendants who are not necessarily trained Nurses, her view being that trained certificated Nurses would be less acceptable to the colonial medical men. "A highly-trained Nurse, for example," said Mrs. Piggott, "would want to teach the doctors."

Of course Mrs. Piggott cannot be expected to be in touch with modern nursing matters, and we must pardon her for falling into an error that, until the public had experience of trained Nurses, used not to be uncommon. It is now found that a very large number of nice amiable women are conscientious enough to learn *thoroughly* the profession of Nursing if they propose to adopt it as their calling in life.

But this is *en passant*. We do not doubt that a few words from Dr. Gage Brown, who interests himself in the movement, or from Lord Loch, whose niece is a highly-trained Nurse, honoured in the profession as the Senior Lady Superintendent of the Indian Army Service, will convince Mrs. Piggott, and any other of the members of the Committee that may question it, that the Colonial doctors would not thank the central organisation for sending out incompletely-trained Nurses to care for their patients; and, moreover, that the knowledge that such a thing was done would result in alienating from the movement the sympathy of those most desirous of extending its very useful and beneficent work.

H. K.

The Sisters of St. Dominic.

The *Daily Chronicle* gives an account of a new settlement of the Sisters of St. Dominic near King William's Town, where those good nuns quietly prove their equality with man. It is a large farm, having two industrial institutions upon it—one for boys, and the other for girls—which are not only controlled, but actually worked, by the sisters and their pupils. The nuns do their own sowing, ploughing, reaping, and hoeing on the farm. They have built most of their own houses, and do all the carpentry work. There is a forge where lady blacksmiths in Dominican dress make the bellows blow and the sparks fly as deftly as their brothers elsewhere, as they supply all the iron-work wanted in the settlement. But it must not be supposed that the sisters have altogether discarded womanly arts and avocations. In one large room might be seen nuns—such as the world has always known them—seated in silence around frames of embroidery, or with familiar piles of "stuff" in front of them, busily plying needle and thread.

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