

has no system of drainage. The water supply upon which the poor depend is also said to be in a terrible condition. It would seem therefore that the plague, which has unhappily been introduced, has found suitable ground for its development, and that the task of eradicating it may be a difficult one. It is reported that the Government is sending medical men from Lisbon, and that the Municipal Council proposes to take energetic measures with the view of stamping out the disease.

We see no mention so far of nurses being detailed to work amongst the plague stricken, and all who know how much depends in cases of plague upon good nursing, will await with interest news as to the arrangements which are being made in this essential. We believe that in Portugal the care of the sick is mostly, if not entirely, in the hands of religious orders; and it would seem not unlikely that, if the epidemic assumes serious proportions, further nursing assistance may be required. In this event we may be quite sure that now, as ever, British nurses will be found ready and willing to offer their services to those who need them. Much has been recently said in disparagement of nurses, but their greatest detractors have never been able to say that they have failed to respond to the call for their services to the sick, from whatever quarter of the globe it may arise. As it was beautifully put by Mrs. May Wright Sewall, the President of the International Council of Women, in her memorable speech at the Matrons' Council Banquet last June, "Nurses have discovered that they are the divine guardians of the wounded (and sick) of any nationality, on any field. They have the inspiration of the international bond. They are a consecrated corps to bring the cup of blessing to all nations."

Should occasion arise we are quite certain that nurses in this country will be ready at short notice to proceed to Portugal there to care for the sufferers from plague. And the result of their work would be, as in all cases where "the quality of mercy" is exercised, to "bless those that give and those that take." British nurses by their contact, in the course of their duty, with other nations are afforded an opportunity of developing an international spirit, and this inevitably effects a reflex benefit on their profession; and the country to which they go gains, as was markedly the case in the Græco-Turkish war, by the high standard of work which they maintain.

Annotations.

THE SANITARY CONGRESS.

THE Sanitary Congress, organized by the Sanitary Institute, is a most useful and pleasant annual institution. This year it is to be held at Southampton, and will last from Tuesday, August 29th, to Friday, September 1st, while Saturday, September 2nd, will be devoted to excursions in the New Forest, and drives to Lyndhurst, Boldre Wood, and Rufus Stone. The proceedings will open by a Reception of the Members of the Congress by the Worshipful the Mayor of Southampton, in the Lecture Hall of Hartley College, to be followed by a Public Luncheon in the Pavilion on the Royal Pier. The Inaugural address will be given by Sir William H. Preece, K.C.B., F.R.S., President of the Institute of Civil Engineers. The Health Exhibition in the Victoria Hall will be opened by the Mayor on the evening of Tuesday, August 29th, who will also on the following evening entertain the Members of Congress at a *Conversazione* and Reception in the Pavilion on the Royal Pier.

Besides the Congress proper, a Conference of Ladies on Domestic Hygiene has been arranged on the mornings of Wednesday and Thursday, August 30th and 31st. Amongst the subjects dealt with will be the Hygiene of Dress, by Viscountess Harberton; the Hygienic Aspects of Occupations Suitable for Women, by Mrs. H. Percy Boulnois; National Evil of Child Labour, by Mrs. F. G. Hogg; Domestic Sanitation for Housewives, by Mrs. S. A. Jones; Some Causes of Infant Mortality in England, by Miss Smith, Inspector L.C.C.; Need for Teachers holding recognised certificates in Hygiene, by Miss Wadmore, and others. The Secretary of the Sanitary Institute, Mr. E. White Wallis, is to be congratulated upon the completeness of the arrangements made, and the Congress should be a great success. We may add that many of the railway companies are issuing tickets to those attending the Congress at a single fare and a quarter for the double journey.

CREMATION BY LIQUID AIR.

It is stated that a company has been formed in New York for the purpose of establishing a crematory, in which the agent employed for incinerating human bodies will be liquid air. This will not be applied direct to the bodies,

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