

which lie between them and the promised land of their desire, have every ground for hope. Thanks to these workers passes have been discovered and roads levelled, along which the oncoming pioneers can travel in safety. And nothing has done more to point to the necessity for concerted action than the retrograde suggestion of the Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board to recognise as "qualified" the one year's nurse of a minor training-school. If she proves the rallying point for our divided forces, if the danger with which we are confronted by her makes us sink lesser differences in effort for the common good, then the qualified nurse will prove a blessing in disguise.

### Annotations.

#### PAYING WARDS.

One of the great problems confronting those who concern themselves with the nursing of the sick is that of the efficient care of the lower middle classes—of those with incomes of from £200 to £500 a year. No class is more worthy or appreciative of skilled care in times of sickness, but to the large majority it is for financial reasons unobtainable.

The present moment, when the reconstruction of several of our large hospitals is pending, seems an opportune one to provide in some measure for the needs of this class by the organisation of wards for paying patients. We are glad to learn that the provision of such wards is contemplated in connection with the rebuilding of King's College Hospital, and we hope that other hospital authorities may follow suit. The benefit to be attained is two-fold. First, there is that already indicated, of meeting a pressing need in relation to the middle classes, and, secondly, the advantage from a training point of view is manifest. It would provide that experience in the care of private patients which the nurse fresh from hospital wholly lacks, and for want of which her professional skill often fails to receive the appreciation which it merits.

The more deliberate methods of work necessary in the care of private patients cannot well be taught in the general wards of a large hospital. A block for paying patients would thus provide valuable experience from the point of view of the training-school.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETY'S PRIZE ANNOUNCEMENT.

An interesting competition, which should have the effect of improving the conditions under which the sick and wounded in time of war are nursed, is announced.

Last year, at the seventh International Conference of Red Cross Societies held at St. Petersburg, the Dowager Empress, Marie Féodorovna, announced her intention to present a sum of 100,000 roubles (about £11,000), the interest of which is to be expended in prizes for encouraging inventors and others in making improvements in means of dealing with the sick and wounded in the field. On the Report of the Sub-Committee, to which the question was referred, it has been decided that the fund is to be called the "Fonds International de la Croix Rouge Impératrice Marie Féodorovna, and is to be entrusted to the Treasury of the Central Committee of the Russian Red Cross Society.

The adjudication of the prizes will be determined by a special International jury, whose members are to be elected by Central Committees of Red Cross Societies and by the International Committee of Geneva. The Central Committee of Russia will have the right to nominate one member and the International Committee of Geneva another. The remaining six members will be elected by the Central Committees of other countries, the committees having the right of election being selected by lot at the Conference.

The prizes at the first competition, which will take place in 1907, will be three in number. They will be awarded to those who submit, in whole or in part, the best solution of the problem of the assistance to be given to wounded; the surest and quickest means of searching for and lifting wounded on battle-fields on land or sea; the best-type stretchers or vehicles for carrying wounded to the dressing stations with the least degree of suffering and greatest rapidity; the means of saving life at sea, the best installations in movable hospitals, wagons, ships, &c., for the final evacuation of sick and wounded.

Competitors will be required to exhibit their inventions in the country where the Conference takes place, at the exhibitions which it is proposed to hold quinquennially in connection with the Conference of the Red Cross Societies. British competitors can obtain printed address labels from the Central British Red Cross Committee, 68, Victoria Street, S.W.

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