

methods of disinfection, hygiene. Although some of these ideas may prove eventually worthless, for the moment they are of great importance, and occasionally life itself depends upon them, e.g., in the manipulation of oxygen apparatus, &c. Courses of instruction should therefore be repeatedly held, in order to put the nurses in the way of seeing what is new, and of refreshing their memories with regard to knowledge already acquired.

For this, we need in Germany only to imitate the military sanitary arrangements, which provide, after the foundation training has been received, regular continuation lessons not only for the doctors, but also for the orderlies, as long as they are serving with the colours.

Although these wishes for the future education of nurses, presented as a pattern plan of training, may not be immediately attained, yet they must, at all events, be the goal for which we are striving. Under no condition, in future, can nurses be regarded as qualified if they have not received at least one year's training in a hospital which is large and many-sided enough to offer opportunity for making acquaintance with the most familiar forms of sickness in the departments of medicine and surgery, and also provides for sufficient theoretical instruction and practical training.

It is our firm hope that our Government will take measures to lay a firm foundation upon which we nurses may be able, in our own strength, to build further, until eventually the goal is attained.

The professional organisation of the nurses of Germany, as it desires to forward the interests of the Sisters "in every direction and in every particular," naturally lays the greatest importance on training as the foundation of professional fitness, and refers all women who wish in future to devote themselves to nursing to those hospitals which recognise the idea that a nurse has a *right* to good training, protection from overwork, and necessary care.

The organisation, founded on January 11th, 1903, has since then attracted to its ranks 300 Sisters, who are active in all parts of Germany in all branches of the profession. The threads which connect them are all gathered together at the office, Bayreuthner Strasse, 37. Everything in the form of advice and help issues from this office, and care is taken not to interfere with their independence, but rather to encourage it.

The first annual report gives a picture of what has been already achieved. Much, however, still remains to be done. We must take measures for the due preservation of the Sisters' health. In the future, individuals will make use of either private or State insurance for illness or invalidism; but we must have a Home of Rest, for many of us are too old or shattered in health for insurance.

Many helping hands are needed for that, and many warm hearts, and we hope that our circle of passive members, now numbering over 100 well-wishers, will soon be multiplied tenfold, so that we may be equal to all demands.

The need for nurses grows daily. There is glorious work in our profession for all those who are in body and spirit prepared for it. We must hasten to make the conditions of life such that the profession of nursing may win back women of education from all parts to share in the work, not as a short attraction for a time, but as a blessed life-work for the healing of suffering humanity, and as fulfilling its part in the social work of our time.

The Empire's Children.

Mr. Richard Seddon, Premier of New Zealand, in an article contributed to the *Daily Express* pleads for the preservation of the children of the Empire. He says in part:—

It will be conceded by all well-ordered minds that the preservation of human life is the first duty of mankind. Apart from the sorrow and suffering occasioned, wherein is the complete utility of producing offspring if a large portion of the life brought forth is lost through ignorance or neglect?

The sound principle that makes the individual responsible for dependent life by inference makes the State collectively equally responsible, but no useful purpose can be served here by entering into a subtle disquisition as to where the duties of the individual end and those of the State begin. The broad fact remains that there is a lamentable loss of infant life, arising chiefly from ignorance, and I am firmly convinced that this loss can only be checked by invoking the power and aid of the State.

The principle of State interference and guidance has been already affirmed in the matter of protection and preservation against the ravages of plagues and epidemics, so why should Governments not extend their functions to the saving of infant life? A comparative return would show that the death-rate of children of five years and under exceeds that arising from epidemics.

Unfortunately, through a wrong estimate of the realities of life and a false modesty on such matters, the all-important subject of maternity is viewed askance, and, although one hesitates to admit it, knowledge of the subject is thought to be almost immoral. Such false beliefs and pretences have much to do with the deplorable ignorance of women, not only in Great Britain, but in the Colonies, regarding motherhood.

This ignorance should be removed, and the State, with the aid of scientific teaching, must assist in the process. The machinery necessary in one direction is at hand in our hospitals, where large numbers of girls could be trained and certificated as nurses. In the Mother Country, as well as in the Colonies, relative to population, there is not sufficient nursing power, and at present there is no proper provision for training and educating extra nurses.

The hospitals and homes only retain sufficient nurses for their own requirements; consequently, their number is limited, and the great population outside of the hospitals is ill supplied. Any girl who desired, and who was certificated as to fitness, should be allowed—subject to proper conditions—to enter a hospital for the purposes of learning the profession of nurse at the expense of the State.

While trained nurses would be of great and direct service to the country, they would become indirect means of disseminating valuable and useful knowledge among the people, and they would themselves make excellent wives and mothers.

Mr. Seddon advocates the practice of midwifery by certificated women only, the supply of qualified midwives gratis to the poor, the State control of Maternity Homes and Foundling Hospitals, the provision of nurses free to the poor under certain conditions, and that the State should pay for the board and lodging of nurses during their training.

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