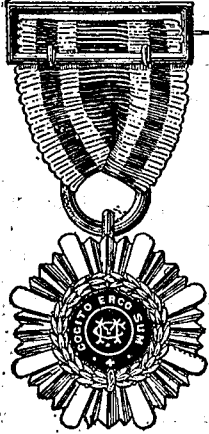


### The Matrons' Council.



A very pleasant social gathering of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland took place at 431, Oxford St., W., on Monday, February 6th, when Miss Amy Hughes, Superintendent of County Nursing Associations in affiliation with Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, gave a most interesting address on "The Work of County Nursing Associations."

The rooms of the Registered Nurses' Society, the use of which for its meetings the

Matrons' Council has been able to secure, looked as usual, under Sister Cartwright's supervision, bright and dainty. Tea and coffee were served as the members and their friends, some fifty in number, arrived, and the time was all too short for the discussion of many topics of mutual interest before the President, Miss Isla Stewart, called the meeting to order.

Miss Stewart said there was no need to introduce the speaker, who was well known to the audience. She would, therefore, ask her at once to address the meeting on a subject with which many of those present were but slightly acquainted, and on which Miss Hughes could speak with a knowledge derived from practical experience. Miss Hughes, in an able address, which will appear in full in a future issue of this journal, described the work of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute and the conditions which led to the formation of County Nursing Associations. She laid special emphasis on the necessity for a knowledge of hygiene and of sanitary matters on the part of nurses, and pleaded for instruction in these subjects to be included in the curriculum of instruction of the nurse-training schools. A realisation of the duties of citizenship on the part of nurses was another point on which she laid much stress, and said that American nurses were far before us in this respect. She thought also that every nurse ought to consider it a duty to cultivate the art of public speaking. This had proved a great difficulty in connection with county nursing associations. A county Superintendent, admirable in all other respects, would plead in relation to this part of her duty "I can't." The reply was "You must." The result was that at present all the county superintendents could explain the organisation and objects of the Jubilee Institute at a public meeting. Miss Hughes said she believed that many women who did not realise it possessed the power of public speaking.

A hearty vote of thanks to the speaker was proposed by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and carried unanimously.

MARGARET BREAY, *Hon. Sec. Matrons' Council.*

### Queen's Nurses and their Work.

Miss Guthrie Wright, Hon. Sec. of the Scottish Branch of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, sends us the following criticism, and as we are entirely in sympathy with her views we have pleasure in publishing this valuable expression of opinion on the nursing of the poor in Scotland by Queen's Nurses in comparison to that by the Holt-Ockley system.

It is unfortunate, writes Miss Guthrie Wright, that the promoters of the Holt-Ockley system of nursing are not content with stating the points to be commended in their system. They have in their printed papers and elsewhere made statements with regard to the working and arrangements of Queen's nurses under Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute which are contrary to fact, and which by reiteration tend to produce an erroneous public opinion as to the limitation of the work of Queen's nurses. I answer these statements *seriatim*.

It is stated (1) that experience has shown that, while Queen's nurses are suitable for town and populous districts, they are not suited for country and scattered districts. The experience of the Institute points to quite a contrary conclusion. Valuable as they are in the former, the advantage of trained district nursing is still greater in the latter districts, as the farther from the doctor the more need has there been found of that full training by which the nurse learns not only what to do, but what to leave undone, and how to report concisely by letter or telegram, and obtain instructions from the doctor. The whole of Argyllshire is covered with a network of Queen's nurses, and they are also employed in other counties in scattered districts in outlying islands, all of which give the same testimony to their value.

2. That in the country difficulties arise from the working of the district from a Central Home. No Queen's nurse works in a country district from a Central Home. Each nurse lives in the district in which she nurses under the control of a local committee, with inspection from the training centre.

3. That the rules of the Institute debar Queen's nurses from staying overnight. The Institute's rule with regard to this is as follows:—"The nurse shall only be employed on night duty under exceptional circumstances, and when due provision can be made for the efficient nursing of other cases under her charge." So little are they debarred from undertaking this duty that in Highland and scattered districts a nurse not only may, but frequently does, remain nights, and even weeks, with a critical case.

4. That in country districts there is difficulty in inducing the poor and working classes to avail themselves of the services of highly-trained and educated nurses. This also is an error. To quote from an article on village nursing by Lady Victoria Lambton, "The Queen's nurses have been welcomed all over Great Britain by the poorest; in crowded slums, in grimy colliery and mining districts, country villages, and lonely turf huts in the bogs and hills, and Irish islands, and they have never been too grand or too fine to do anything needful for the good or the comfort of their patients." I have no hesitation in asserting that a plebiscite would prove that the majority prefer a non-resident to a resident nurse in cases that can be equally nursed by either.

5. That when the mother is laid aside by illness

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