

Nursing Echoes.

* * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



The Countess of Dudley, towards the end of last week, was touring through Connemara, in a motor-car, says "M. A. P." She also went to visit the Islands of Arran and their quaint and deeply-interesting people. The object of Lady Dudley's tour was to see for herself how the nurses, engaged under the scheme established through her initiative, are faring. These nurses are stationed in the very poor districts in the west of Ireland, and their services are highly valued. Lady Dudley's inspection was no mere formal one. She took her nurses around to their patients in her motor-car, and herself visited the peasant women on the nurses' "rounds." Her visit to the Arran Islands will be remembered as one of the most interesting of her Irish experiences. During the holiday season a few words about the islands may be *apropos*. Situated in the Atlantic, thirty miles from Galway, they are inhabited by a Gaelic-speaking, kindly, hospitable people, who live in villages on the shore facing the mainland, the rest of the islands being almost entirely composed of a surface of bare rocks. Instead of shoes most of the islanders wear "pampooties," made of the untanned hide of the cow, with the hair outwards. The Hon. Emily Lawless' novel, "Grania," deals with life in the Arran Islands, which she visited for the purposes of her book.

The Hon. Mrs. Cropper, in a very useful paper on Nursing in Small Workhouses read at a Conference in the north of England, referred to the now famous recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Nursing, criticising its recommendations as to nurses' leisure. She said: "The Departmental Committee recommended that nurses should have the following leave:—Two hours a day; half a day a week; a day a month; part of every other Sunday; three weeks a year. I think the half day a week is the most indulgent of these recommendations, but if that is taken away the rest is very reasonable; but in how many of our smaller workhouses is it possible to grant it? Perhaps in none, because they are mostly understaffed. Yet nursing is arduous work, depressing work, anxious work, and more leave of absence is necessary than in other callings."

A weekly half-day is more necessary for nurses than any other class of workers, because they work seven instead of six days a week, and a weekly day of rest was the origin of the time-honoured Sabbath. Moreover, workhouses are State institutions, and the State has absolutely no right to sweat its employees.

One of the most useful results of registration of nurses will be that the general public will be able to distinguish nurse from midwife. Each worker has her own useful sphere, but the irresponsible manner in which the public confuse the two is extraordinary, in so far as they constantly use the term "nurse" when alluding to a "midwife." The latter is not necessarily, and seldom is, a "nurse" at all.

County Cottage Nursing Associations are great offenders in this matter, and from reports of their proceedings we constantly notice that a certificated midwife is described as "a skilled nurse." At the recent Conference convened by the Essex County Cottage Nursing Association held at Chelmsford, every speaker is reported to have confused this issue. One gentleman moved "That some means be devised whereby the services of an efficient nurse be secured in every district in the county either by the establishment of voluntary committees or by some movement to be initiated by the Guardians of the various districts. They were more concerned with the deserving poor than with the pauper. Before the Midwives' Act there was somebody who could be called in, but now there was nobody, and the obligation was greater that in every parish there should be a trained woman who should be at the demand of everybody." Trained in what—in nursing, or in midwifery, or in both?

Incidentally, the cost of the workers required was stated to be £48 per annum. This is much less than the cost of an efficient domestic servant, if lodging, board, wages, and washing is taken into consideration.

In an admirable article, which appeared in the *Morning Post* recently from a special correspondent in Berlin on Feeding of School Children, the writer describes the four organisations for the distribution of food, and under the heading of "Associations for Feeding Poor Children in the Public Schools and Suburb of Potsdam," gives the following interesting information:—

Let us glance now at a country holiday scheme which is carried out by the Red Cross Society, with the help and approval of the city. About ten minutes' walk from the tram terminus (which itself is quite in a suburb) there are beautiful fir woods on a bit of rising ground. Here any day during the summer months may be found a happy colony of sickly children engaged in drinking in health

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)