

big hearth, a sort of shelf, some rough bedding, and a cow. . . . They have not enough land to support them, and every winter sees them on the edge of starvation." The conditions of life indeed seem very little removed from those of primitive man, but surely there are landlords who have obligations, and there are sanitary authorities who should insist that the people do not live under conditions which are a public danger. Poor, poverty-stricken, grief-stricken Ireland. It will be well if the hand of the trained nurse can do something to heal the sore which is ever open, and to bridge over the chasm which the Act of Union has never effectively spanned. A little human kindness and sympathy, and the warm heart of the Irish peasant responds.

An interesting paper read at the Church Congress was that by Miss Amy Hughes, General Superintendent of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, on "District Nursing in Town and Country." In giving a brief review of the origin and progress of the District Nursing movement, the speaker pointed out a fact too often forgotten in these days, viz., that an important part of the work of district nurses is to act as Health Missioners as well as to nurse the sick, and quoted the testimony of Mr. Charles Booth to the valuable work done by nurses in this direction.

It was Queen Victoria's express wish that only hospital trained nurses should be entered on the Roll of Queen's Nurses, "in order that skilled nursing may be within reach of the poorest of my people," and this plan has been adopted.

There are two fundamental principles governing the organisation of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute:—The Special Training of the Nurses, and the expert supervision of their work.

Two other principles of the Institute are:—

1. That the nurses shall not be almoners—their work is nursing, and nursing only, though they are encouraged to bring deserving cases to the notice of the proper local authorities, and in every way thus to secure necessary sick comforts for their patients.

2. That the nurses shall never interfere with the religious views of their patients or their friends.

In connection with the Queen's Jubilee Institute a system of County Nursing Associations have been inaugurated. Working in connection with these Associations are (1) Queen's Nurses, with full hospital, district, and maternity training, costing the Association from £85 to £100 per annum; and (2) Village Nurses, with preferably twelve, and in no case less than nine months' district and maternity training, who are certified as Midwives under the Midwives' Act, costing the Association from £40 to £52 per year. All are under the expert supervision of a Queen's Nurse acting as County Superintendent.

It should never be forgotten, says Miss Hughes, that the additional cost of the fully-trained Queen's Nurse is fully justified by her additional skill. If this is recognised as desirable in town areas with medical aid and hospitals within easy reach, how much more indispensable is it in districts far from medical help of any kind. It is sometimes stated that these nurses are "too well trained" to be useful in the country. Yet they are working most successfully in the desolate regions on the West Coast of Ireland, in the lonely islands on the West and North of Scotland, in remote Highland glens, in scattered rural districts in England, while for the Welsh mountains it is necessary to specially train Welsh speaking women as Queen's Nurses.

Miss Hughes says that it is wiser, as a rule, not to employ a nurse in her native place; she is not likely to have the same influence with her patients, and there is more tendency to gossip than there would be with a stranger.

Referring to the system of nursing known as the "Holt Ockley Benefit Nursing Association," Miss Hughes said: "The Council of the Queen's Institute from the first determined against the principle of the nurses living with their patients, believing the want of accommodation, the difficulty in providing adequate food and rest for the nurse, the inevitable tendency to value her for her household services, rather than her nursing skill, are detrimental to the educational side of a district nurse's work. There is no wish, where circumstances render it necessary, to prevent the nurse devoting her whole time to one patient if needed, but this is to be the exception, not the rule.

She concluded by saying that it is not systems alone which bring success, it is the work of each individual nurse which makes the work what it is.

The influence of a good nurse remains after her nursing services are ended. It is the opportunities given by district nursing that make it so important and so responsible. Nurses who grasp the inner meaning of their work have few limits to their powers of usefulness. They nurse the homes as well as the patients, they give valuable object lessons in the practical details of nursing, simple sick cookery, cleanliness, &c., thus helping their fellow women to be less helpless and hopeless when sickness invades the home.

They can advocate self-restraint, thrift, and household economies; they can give valuable advice in the dieting and management of infants and young children, so helping to strengthen the sinews of the nation. "As the child is, so the man is," and the simple truths of proper feeding taught in language "understood by the people" mean the future welfare of its sons.

Miss A. I. Pringle, some time Matron of the Royal

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