

## Nursing Echoes.

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During King Edward's recent visit to the Royal Agricultural Society's Show at Derby, a touching incident took place. In the midst of the crowd listening to His Majesty's speech was an aged nurse in the person of Mrs. Milne, wife of a hospital sergeant of the 7th Hussars, who went through the Crimean War. Mrs.

Milne was a nurse first at Varna, and afterwards at Scutari, before the arrival of Miss Florence Nightingale. With these facts His Majesty was made acquainted at his own request, and the old lady was presented to him, the King graciously inquiring after the old lady's health. Mrs. Milne, who seemed much moved by the King's kindly notice, asked his acceptance of a rose. "Thank you, very much," said King Edward, stretching forth his hand for the offered flower. Having possessed himself of Mrs. Milne's humble gift, His Majesty kept it in his possession during the day.

Whilst quite inclined to congratulate St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, in securing for its new Matron a lady trained in the most excellent nursing school attached to King's College Hospital, we think the four selected candidates have just cause of complaint. It is reported that after their interview with the Committee, and pending a second interview, the Matron of Queen Charlotte's Hospital was approached and appointed to the vacant Matronship.

As three out of the four selected candidates were first-rate women, of ripe experience and high professional qualifications, it would be interesting to know why they were all rejected.

In reporting the statistics of the work of the Colonial Nursing Association, the total number of nurses at work during the year was 144, of whom 108, it should have been stated, were employed by Government and 36 as private nurses. The number of nurses steadily increases year by year.

We regret to note in last week's *Lancet*, in an article on Army Nursing, that it gives its support to the illogical and reactionary article which appeared in the *Broad Arrow* of June 16th on the modern system of nursing in the Army, inaugurated under the personal superintendence of her Majesty the Queen. Everyone knows that the old system, which might be called the "general post" method, was thoroughly inefficient, that under it the orderlies were not systematically trained, and that the miserable smattering they received in theory and in practical work in the wards did not qualify them to care for a dummy, much less for a sick comrade. That, with a divided authority in the sick wards, they went as they pleased, and ignorance and inefficiency combined resulted in a condition of affairs in military hospitals which have only to be put out in black and white to nip in the bud this latest attempt upon the part of the old regime to revert to a condition bordering on barbarism.

The *Lancet* is evidently inclined to believe that under the reformed system of Army Nursing "there is no justification for a maintenance of a staff of nurses far in excess of the requirements of a peace organisation." Surely our South African experiences proved to the hilt the false policy of waiting until we were in the clutches of war before making preparations for the care of the sick and wounded. Think of those crude conditions in hospital, under which our poor men suffered and died in the early days of the campaign. Nine nursing sisters allotted to a hospital of 500 beds!

What sort of attention could these sisters render to the sick? The whole thing was heartrending.

The *Lancet* remarks moreover "This is a matter calling for Mr. Haldane's attention." So it is, and we are pleased to note that he has speedily discouraged the reactionary influences which have been at work for some time, suggesting economy in the Army Medical Department at the expense of an efficient female nursing service for the rank and file in the Army.

On Monday in the House of Commons, Mr. Haldane informed Mr. A. C. Morton (L, Sutherland) that the establishment of the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service was fixed to provide for the efficient nursing of the sick in military hospitals at home and abroad. The distribution of the staffs had been decided upon by the civil matrons of the Nursing Board, and all matters relating to Army nursing formed the subject of repre-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)