

circumstances, for the Poor Law relief which "has gathered about it associations of harshness, and still more of hopefulness." Some of the more important recommendations of the Commission are the abolition of Boards of Guardians, the abolition of the General Workhouses, that no disfranchisement should be attached to any form of medical assistance, that Labour Exchanges should be established and worked by the Board of Trade, and that Labour Colonies should be organised under the control of the Local Government Board. A Minority Report urged a system of classification which would make a broad distinction between the able-bodied and non-able-bodied, placing the following sections under the control of various Committees of the County Councils. Under the Education Committee, children of school age, under the Health Committee, the sick, infants under school age, and the aged needing institutional care, under the Asylums Committee the mentally defective, under the Pensions Committee the aged, to whom pensions are awarded. The creation of a State Department in charge of a Minister of Labour is also advocated.

Reports in reference to Scotland and Ireland have also been issued.

MENTAL NURSING.

A distinguishing feature of mental nursing is that it is so largely practised in institutions—either in public or private asylums. The milder, chronic, and borderland cases provide work for a certain number of private nurses, but, on account of the cost of special nurses, which few can afford for a lengthened period, the close supervision necessary in acute cases, and the more constant medical care which is obtainable in institutions, the large proportion of these cases are treated in asylums, or as they should now be called, mental hospitals. We are leaving behind, in the century that is past, the idea which died slowly that the attendant on an insane person is merely a "keeper" whose duty is to prevent him from injuring himself or others, and realising, that in the successful treatment of the mind diseased the assistance of the well-trained nurse is most essential. The nurse in whom physical strength is not the factor of first importance, but whose own personality is one which will command the respect of the patient, who, in addition to technical skill, has sufficient sympathy and imagination to give her some insight into the condition of mind of her charge, and strength of character to deal with it with wisdom and tact. It follows that there are needed for the care of the insane the highest type of nurses which our profession can produce.

The increased appreciation of each other's

work by general and mental nurses was exemplified during the International Congress of Nurses, when one whole Session was devoted to "The Care of the Insane."

The definite result of the Session was that the Medico-Psychological Association, and the Matrons of Asylums were invited to convene a Conference to discuss the nursing of the insane, and the standard of education for mental nurses.

The Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Sir William Collins, M.D., M.P., "to provide for superannuation allowances to officers and servants employed in public asylums for the insane in Great Britain and Ireland, and to make other relative provisions," has passed into law. It was supported by the Asylum Workers' Association, which represents the interests of this class.

PRIVATE NURSING.

Nursing in private families, still continues in a sadly disorganised condition. In no branch of nursing is the lack of a definite standard of education, and of the disciplinary control which would be exercised by a central Governing Body, felt more keenly than in the private nursing world. It includes, on the one hand, most highly trained and efficient nurses whose assistance is indispensable to surgeons and physicians in serious cases, and whose skilled work entitles them to adequate remuneration, and, on the other, the flotsam and jetsam who have been dismissed from the training schools, but whose work may pass muster where there is little supervision; the cottage nurse with the most elementary knowledge of nursing, who, when her contract is completed, finds private nursing more remunerative and attractive than nursing cottagers, in whose houses she is required to act as general charwoman; and, lastly, that more sinister army who find the private nursing portal the most easy method of entrance to the houses of the rich, where they can, unsuspected, indulge their criminal instincts, and break the eighth and other commandments, for a time at least, with impunity.

As the public have no means of distinguishing the real from the spurious nurse much disrepute is most unjustly brought on private nurses as a class, and much danger to the sick public from ignorant and vicious women posing as nurses.

DISTRICT NURSING.

The nursing of the poor in their own homes in the United Kingdom is largely controlled by Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute. The training required of a Queen's Nurse is three years in hospital and experience in district nursing, followed by examination. Unfortunately, in

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