

Nursing Echoes.



At a recent meeting of the Queen Victoria's Institute for Nurses, the Countess of Dudley reported to the Council the urgent need for the establishment of district nursing work in the various Australasian Colonies. She had come over from Australia with the express purpose of trying to organise an Order of district nurses on the lines of the Queen's Institute and the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada. She sought the Council's approval and assistance in the scheme. It was decided that the matter should be referred to the Executive Committee, and a further report made to the Council. Lady Dudley proposes to visit Canada with a view to seeking information as to the work there of the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Having come into personal touch with Australasian Matrons and nurses, Lady Dudley is fully aware that district nursing must be carried out by the thoroughly trained and efficient worker. After years of careful organisation, very high standards have been attained by nurses in the Commonwealth, and they would bitterly resent the introduction of the English rural nursing system into Australasia. No two standards of nursing for rich and poor would be tolerated in that democratic quarter of the globe.

We fear the wise warning of Dr. T. D. Griffiths and Mrs. Lancaster, at the meeting recently convened at Swansea in connection with the South Wales Nursing Association, will fall on deaf, if aristocratic ears. The object of the Association is to provide "nurses" for rural districts by training them in "midwifery"—and failing funds (they so often fail in this particular) to pay a Queen's Nurse—to provide a cheaper and less efficient article.

Dr. Griffiths complained of the indefinite nature of the qualifications of the nurses they were going to have. He said we now had doctors, surgeons, and quacks, and they were going to advocate a system of quack nurses. They had no guarantee that the nurses appointed would be qualified for their work. After a woman had seen a few cases she could turn, as a last resource, to nursing. In the first place, they should guarantee proper remuneration, and insist upon certain qualifications. He asked if it would not be

wiser to give liberal pay and have nurses fully qualified than have half-trained ones for less.

Mrs. Lancaster also disapproved, and thought it better to have no nurse at all than a half-trained one, and hoped it would not be encouraged in Swansea.

Unfortunately, Wales is going strongly for the semi-qualified nurse for the poor.

Sir Marcus Samuel presided at the crowded annual meeting of the Sick Room Helps Society and Nurses' Home, which is supported by the Jewish community, and works amongst the very poor in East London, and which was held at his residence, 3, Hamilton Place, Piccadilly, W., on Thursday in last week.

The staff of this Society consists of six maternity nurses, superintended by Mrs. S. Levy, and three Queen's Nurses for general work, the Nursing Superintendent of this department being Nurse Orthmann. In addition, between 60 and 70 sick room helps are employed. The headquarters are at present at 61, Philpot Street, E., but the staff and work are fast outgrowing the accommodation of the Home, and the prospect of expansion in the near future, owing to a bequest of £5,000 from the Lewis Hill Fund, which will enable the Committee to build a Nurses' Home with a maternity ward attached, is eagerly looked forward to.

In his opening remarks, Sir Marcus Samuel said that, when so many societies were competing, the growth of the Society was quite extraordinary, and was a confirmation of the truth that people love to help those who help themselves. Nearly £1,242 in the provident collection represented subscriptions of 1d. weekly from 4,000 people. Such people deserved the help which more fortunate members of the community could render. The number of nurses in proportion to helps was comparatively few, but the helps rendered a type of assistance in poor homes which was not within the duty or scope of the nurses, and freed them to give their skilled attention where it was really needed.

A very satisfactory report and balance-sheet was presented by Mrs. Model, who said the finances were entirely managed by women. The chief success of the work was due, she believed, to the delicate and strong thread of sympathy which ran through it all. She referred to the paper on "Sick Room Helpers," read at the Jubilee Congress of District Nurses at Liverpool, last year, by Miss Eleanor Rathbone, which described an experiment recently begun in that city. Since then the Sick Room Helps Society, whose work she was then called upon to describe, had received many enquiries

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)