

Nursing in the Bush.

From *Una*, the official organ of the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association, we reprint in full the inspiring speech of her Excellency the Countess of Dudley, addressed to the members of that Association, when on the 29th of November last, she entertained them at a Garden Party at Government House, Melbourne. Her Excellency said:

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—It is impossible for me to stand facing any large body of the nursing profession and call the members of it by any other title, for I have for years past had the advantage of counting amongst my friends many nurses in the Old Country. We have worked together, and I have had opportunities of knowing more than most people—something, at any rate, of the zeal and self-sacrifice, and the devotion to duty, which constitutes the mainspring of their lives. So, in speaking to you, I feel I am on familiar ground.

All of you know, I think, that I am hoping to see before long laid down in Australia the foundation of a scheme for district nursing in the Bush, and it is upon this subject that I am anxious to say a few words to you to-day.

I do not intend to speak to you of the advantages of district nursing. I know that the R.V.T.N.A. counts amongst its members many that are living examples of the benefits which can be bestowed upon a community by the ministrations of a district nurse, and no better organisation could be found than the Melbourne District Nursing Association. But I want you to consider with me for a few minutes the point of view from which, I hope, any scheme of Bush district nursing will be regarded by all those who will have occasion to take part in it. And, broadly speaking, these may be divided into two sections—the promoters and organisers of the scheme and those who are to carry it out.

Let me use an illustration to make my meaning clear to you. An army is composed, broadly speaking, of two sections, officers and men, and we all know when any scheme of military attack or defence is under consideration—when perhaps the question at issue is no less vital than the vindication of a nation's honour—that, great as the responsibility is which lies vested in the hands of the officers commanding, the real issues of the campaign lie with those who compose the material of an army—the non-commissioned officers and men who make up the rank and file.

Of this project of Bush nursing you are the material on which the success or failure of the enterprise depends. It must be well officered, too; its executive must represent the best that Australia can produce. But of this great project, the most important part will rest with the nurses who constitute themselves its pioneers, who lay its foundations and raise up the standards by which it shall be judged in after years. And so if any of you, the nurses of the R.V.T.N.A., eventually decide to take part in what I hope may grow to be a

national movement, it will be, I know, in the true missionary spirit—carrying into this new branch of an old work the self-sacrifice, the devotion to duty, and the unselfishness which distinguishes the profession to which you belong.

It is not for me to speak to you to-day of the details of an organisation which has as yet barely taken shape, but this much I may venture to assure you—that as any leader should always consider the comfort and welfare of those who follow him of paramount importance in any undertaking, so will the promoters of this project be zealous in their consideration for the nurses who are to establish it. Everything that forethought can devise will be provided for their well-being, their safe-guarding, their security. On the other hand, those who decide to put their hands to the plough to furrow this as yet almost unbroken soil of nursing work in Australia must remember that they may have to bring to it certain qualifications which may be superfluous in town districts. They must be possessed of a sound physique, to encounter hardships of climate and distance to which they will be exposed. Not only must their standard of efficiency cover the requirements of the lonely districts where they may be sent, and should represent the three divisions of medical, surgical, and midwifery training, but they should be dowered with plenty of personal experience. It is a field of work perhaps better suited to older nurses than to those but recently trained. But in any case it is work which calls only to those whose ears are attuned to hear a note pitched high above the turmoil of mundane things, and who have it in their hearts to be strong, and perhaps to suffer, in order to bring comfort and relief to hundreds of their fellow men and women. We want in our pioneers, who will also be the captains of this undertaking, the qualities of courage, patience, and unselfishness, which distinguish those persons—the salt of the earth—who find it possible and even congenial to sacrifice their individual aspirations for the general good of the community.

It is needless to say that this speech was received with great acclamation.

WEDDING BELLS.

A pretty wedding took place recently from the General Hospital, Johannesburg, when Miss Leila Florence Allison, daughter of Mr. T. S. Allison, Magistrate at Standerton, was married to Dr. Mudd, senior resident surgeon at the Hospital. The bride had just completed her training as a nurse, and carried off the gold medal at the final examination. After the wedding ceremony there was a reception at Hospital House, kindly lent for the occasion by Dr. and Mrs. Mackenzie. Among the numerous guests present were Mrs. Magill, Matron of the Hospital, and all of the nursing staff who were not on duty. There were many beautiful presents, including a solid silver kettle from the resident staff, a beautiful fruit dish from Mrs. Magill, and a silver entrée dish from the nursing staff. Many were the good wishes expressed for the future happiness of the bride and bridegroom.

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