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Editorial.

"OUT BACK."

The Countess of Dudley's District Nursing Scheme, or, as it has now been decided to call it, "The Australian Order for District Nursing," is making progress—although not on the lines originally suggested—and Lady Dudley has written to the Australian press to say she has reluctantly come to the conclusion that the Bush Nursing Scheme is not wholly acceptable to the people. The truth is the Australian nursing world is self-governed and democratic—and the Bush Nursing Scheme was neither. The fact that women are citizens in the Commonwealth was quite overlooked, and the members of the medical and nursing professions who have raised nursing in Australia from ill-equipped drudgery to a highly skilled and organised profession for women, naturally dreaded the effect of any form of district nursing which might in time follow on the lines of the Queen's Institute in England—which by affiliation has recognised as district nurses, hundreds of ill-educated and quite insufficiently trained women as professional nurses for the rural sick poor—a step of a very disastrous nature so far as the prestige of nursing in this country as a whole is concerned. Australian nurses who are politically enfranchised, will not accept absolute government and control by aristocratic persons, whose only claim for interference with professional standards is their social influence. Here is the matter in a nutshell.

But for all that the generous impulses of Lady Dudley will bear good fruit. We learn, at a public meeting recently in Sydney at which the Lord Mayor presided, three resolutions were passed (1) expressing

general approval of the scheme as submitted by Lady Dudley, (2) recommending that a provisional State Council for New South Wales should be formed in order to co-operate with the provisional Federal Council, (3) pledging those present to stimulate public interest in the scheme, and to help to raise as large a sum as possible in its support.

A meeting of the provisional Federal Council of the Order was also held at Government House, at which the Governor General, who presided, and Lady Dudley were present, as well as the Governors of Victoria and Tasmania and official delegates representing New South Wales and South Australia, Mr. Harold Boulton, Miss Amy Hughes and others. The draft Constitution was formally approved, and a nursing committee formed with Her Excellency the Countess of Dudley as chairman, and an executive and finance committee with Professor Anderson Stuart as chairman. These two committees will consider the general by-laws and regulations for Federal and State Councils and for the district committees, and report to the next meeting of the Federal Council.

An important effect of the establishment of the scheme is likely to be that women will be encouraged to settle in the outlying districts where their services are needed, instead of remaining in overcrowded cities as at present. This is but one more instance of the national value of the work of trained nurses, for it is evident that before the resources of Australia can be developed "out back," this skilled worker is indispensable as a pioneer settler, in order to give that sense of security of care in sickness which will inspire other women to penetrate into lonely outposts of the interior. The trained nurse is, in short,

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