

The Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute.

CONFERENCE OF NORTHERN NURSING ASSOCIATIONS.

Mr. D. F. Pennant, who presided on Friday in last week at the Albert Hall, Manchester, at the first Conference of Nursing Associations affiliated to Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, held outside London, explained in his opening remarks that this had been rendered necessary by the marked development of the movement in the North, and the large increase in the number of nurses.

THE SPHERE OF A QUEEN'S NURSE AND ITS LIMITATIONS.

The first subject down for discussion was "The Sphere of a Queen's Nurse and its Limitations," and in this connection Mrs. Bond, of Leicester, also presented a paper on "District Nursing as an Agency in the Prevention of Consumption," a work with which Queen's Nurses are so intimately connected.

Mrs. Bond said that the work of Queen's Nurses was of a dual nature. In all well-organised associations the nurses were carrying out preventive work while performing their ordinary duties of nursing the sick. Thus they insisted on a separate bed for a consumptive patient, and, at the same time, detected probable contacts, and gave instructions in the home management of consumptive patients, who were a terrible danger to the family. The nation is, said Mrs. Bond, realising its responsibility with regard to consumption in a way that has never been done before. . . . There is also a growing demand for special tuberculosis visitors, and it is very interesting to note from whence the supply will come. It is important that all who are interested in district nursing should recognise these facts, and that they should consider whether they will be able, as occasion arises, to take yet another step forward in the interests of humanity either by being prepared to take up the extra work in their own district nursing associations or by co-operating with some other authority in so doing.

The question of the possibility of nurses acting as agents in the spread of consumption having been raised, the Chairman said that two medical authorities on the subject, from fourteen years' experience, had authoritatively stated that there was no danger whatever of the infection of consumption being carried by nurses from one patient to another. It was only when people lived with consumptive persons, breathing the same air, laden with the microbes of the disease, that harm could ensue. Very few people did not suffer from consumption at some time or other of their lives, but they did not know it.

In connection with the suggestion that preventive work was rather useless unless compulsory notification was adopted, the Chairman suggested that the nurse would arrive at too late a stage if she only arrived when the case became notifiable. The object of preventive work was to prevent con-

sumption from getting a hold, to get children from consumptive homes at work in the open air, to see that they are properly fed, etc. Thus the nurse's work was to deal with incipient consumption before it became notifiable.

Mr. W. G. Rathbone (Liverpool) considered that Nursing Associations should confine their work to cases in which actual nursing was required; others were better dealt with by those in touch with Health Committees. Another delegate said that the Manchester Association was not allowed by its constitution to attend cases where a doctor had not been called in.

Sir Archibald Williamson, M.P., pointed out that the conditions of cities like Manchester and Liverpool differed from those of the smaller towns and larger villages, where the district nurse had to combine the functions of health visitor and district nurse.

The Chairman mentioned that 33 or 34 Queen's Nurses were at work in Ireland in connection with the crusade against consumption, and that a large fund for fighting the disease was being raised in Wales.

SCHOOL NURSING.

Mr. Rathbone explained the system which exists in Liverpool for the organisation of School Nursing in connection with Education Committees. Nurses were employed on this work for a period, and then returned to ordinary district work. School nursing was not popular, and many nurses were reluctant to take it up if they were to be side-tracked for the rest of their days, but were glad to do so for a time.

Sir Archibald Williamson pointed out that objections to the direct employment of nurses by local authorities were that they had no one to fight their battles, and might be forced to do many inferior duties, and were often paid less than a real living wage.

THE PAYMENT, AND THE SHORTAGE OF NURSES.

Other subjects discussed were the abuse of district nursing by persons who could afford to pay, provision by nurses for old age, and the payment of nurses. Miss Olga Hertz (Manchester) differed from Mr. Laurence Holt, of Liverpool, who considered £35, with board, lodging, and washing, adequate remuneration for a nurse, and the general opinion expressed was that the present salaries are inadequate.

Speaking on the abuse of the district nurse, Sir Archibald Williamson expressed the opinion that people who could afford to pay took advantage of charity. There was, however, a class of people who were not exactly poor, but who were not able to afford the guinea and a half a week for a nurse to stay in the house. Such people could give a little, and in Liverpool they had a daily visiting nurse, who gave some assistance each day, in return for some payment.

Miss Hughes spoke of the serious shortage of nurses, and of the difficulty of getting hospital nurses to obtain district nursing training. She thought this due to two causes—the prejudice of hospital nurses against district work and the increase in the occupations open to women.

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