

under consideration—an annuity for those nurses who so hardly earn their daily bread.

I am, Madam,

A NURSING SISTER.

This nurse was trained only fifteen years ago, and she owns that she is nursing the widow of a Colonel, who will be in receipt of a good pension, and should therefore be paying a good salary for the nurse's services. But the system of exploiting the private nurse's work is really the reason no doubt why the nurse in question is not earning sufficient to save for old age.

The appeal for the Florence Nightingale Memorial has been sent out from St. Thomas' Hospital in the name of the Executive Committee. The names of the General Committee give the appeal an appearance of wide-spread support for the annuity scheme, concerning which they have not been consulted. The cost of the Statue is not to exceed £5,000.

The Spirit which Inspires Success.

The Countess of Dudley will be greatly missed by the nursing community in Australia. Before leaving the Commonwealth we are glad she was able to be present at Beech Forest at the installation of the first nurse under the Bush Nursing Scheme inaugurated by her.

Lady Dudley's speech upon this occasion contains much which those who attempt pioneer work might take to heart. It is so easy to begin new work with enthusiasm, amidst applause, but it is so difficult to drudge year after year for the attainment of unpopular yet beneficent reforms, and the spirit which inspired Lady Dudley's speech is the spirit which can drudge and accomplish. She said in part:

"I do not think that you will want from me to-day any mere conventional expression of the pleasure it gives me to come amongst you. Such phrases are suitable perhaps for some occasions, but not, I think, for this one; for I know that all here present are aware that for me to-day is a red-letter day, and that to be here and take part in this installation of the first bush nurse in this State means to me the realisation of a hope which has lain near to my heart ever since I came to Australia. It may be said, I know, that it is a realisation only in part; that it falls far short of what has been called the bush-nursing scheme, and that consequently it is not an occasion for unqualified rejoicing, but rather one for regret that the beginning we are making now is such a small and insignificant one compared to the largeness of our aspirations. But is it so? I think not. Personally, my feeling to-day is one of deep thankfulness and confident hope.

NO ADMISSION OF FAILURE.

"May I say at once that what has been known as the failure of the Federal bush-nursing scheme has never seemed to me to be a failure? The Federal scheme was perhaps too ambitious; possibly it aimed at too immediate a success, and so it failed; and if it failed from these causes I am glad it failed, for failure of this kind is the surest road to success. It is often the only process by which ultimate success can be achieved. I know this to be so. My experience of all work has taught it to me. And so when my appeal for the Federal scheme failed I was almost glad; at least I was not sorry. I recognised it as the natural process out of which some day perhaps—not in my time here, but still some day—success would come. And to-day I feel it is coming. Not on Federal, but perhaps more wisely on State lines; not in the way I planned, but what does that matter? Not in a large or ambitious way, but all the better for that. All thorough work must be slow; all true development must be by slight and even minute degrees.

A FAIR STRUCTURE CONTEMPLATED.

"The higher the structure the slower the progress; and we still contemplate raising a fair structure, high and of noble proportions, if slow in the building. It is of this that to-day we are laying the foundation-stone. But because our beginning is small we must not let ourselves be discouraged. All great things grow from small beginnings. The oak springs from the acorn, and the flood gathers from the first drops; if the acorn be rightly sown, and the rain steady and persistent. So may I leave this message with you to-day. Have no regrets that the bush nursing scheme which was to have been so widespread and comprehensive has narrowed itself down to this small beginning. If our aspirations are in the right direction we need never regret that they fall short of their intention. Wasn't it George Herbert who said: 'Aim at a star, perchance you hit a tree.' The great point is to aim at the star. If this is a true beginning, as I believe it to be, there need be no limit to the proportions which some day it may reach. My earnest hope has always been to see an organised system of skilled nursing reach far into the bush, until the needs of town and country districts are fully met.

A MODEL TO FOLLOW.

"There is no reason whatever why such a system should not follow upon the establishment of this first bush nurse whom we instal in Beech Forest to-day. If she fulfils, by God's help, her mission, and those who are pledged to support her do so faithfully, she may be only the first of many such as she. And so the recognition of this need for district nursing may spread from State to State, until slowly and imperceptibly it becomes a national movement, upheld by universal support. And then, by way of the tree, we shall have reached our star; by way of to-day's small beginning we may yet realise our larger, broader scheme. Meanwhile, I am confident that the dwellers in this district of Beech Forest will do all in their power to help us by making this first venture the success we desire it to be. It was once said by a great thinker that any experiment which can benefit by one hair's-breadth a single human life is a thousand times

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