

## The Colonial Nursing Association.

The annual meeting of the Colonial Nursing Association was held on May 25th, at 3, Grosvenor Place (by kind permission of Mr. and Lady Esther Smith). H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenberg honoured the meeting with her presence.

The President, Lord Ampthill, opened the proceedings by saying how deeply grateful the Association was for the unfailing interest of her Royal Highness. He believed that she had never failed to be present at its annual meeting, and she had a real and sincere regard for its welfare. Sir Frederick Treves would speak from the internal aspect, from what he had observed he would like to say how exceedingly well served they were by the Executive. They displayed a passionate zeal for the cause, and the reason for this zeal was that the work was not merely philanthropic, it was patriotic, truly imperial.

Sir Frederick Treves, who moved the adoption of the report, which was taken as read, said that he was familiar with many of the colonies connected with the Association, and also with the hospitals, medical officers, and nursing arrangements. Taken as a whole, the hospitals were remarkably good, but it was a great mistake to suppose that they could be run entirely on European lines. In the tropics, for instance, an operating theatre would in some cases be unendurable, and the best operating room under those circumstances was the verandah outside the patient's bedroom.

In the matter of nurses any medical man would say the supply was insufficient. The Colonies required very special nurses, as they had infinitely more responsibility than those at home and they should have initiative capacity and organisation. They should be the very best obtainable. If necessary, the pay should be a great deal higher, in order to secure first grade nurses.

No terms could exaggerate the benefit of a stay in hospital to the native patient. It was the finest education he received. Lessons were learned of cleanliness, health, method, sympathy, and, above all, of the kindness of the white race. Nothing was so great a factor in bringing the races together as the hospital, and in the hospital there were no persons so powerful as the nurses in promoting an understanding between the races, and they were a great political power for good. In addition to the native patients were the white men, the actual founders of empire, mostly junior officials, planters, and pioneers, many of them leading hard lives and having no resources to fall back upon. To these young men came the tragedy of disease, and after lying in their huts, nursed or not nursed by their "boy," to be carried down to the hospital and tended by an English nurse was like entering Paradise. What they appreciated most of all was the thought that this was provided by those at home. Of all Societies supported, this should be the first.

The adoption of the report was seconded by Sir Alfred Sharpe, K.C.M.G., who said that the advent of the nurses had reduced the European mortality in Nyasaland by quite one half. All nurses should

take a course in tropical hygiene before coming out, he stated the pay now offered them was lower than that of the most subordinate European official, and should be increased. There could be no better investment for the Colonial Office than the establishment of well equipped hospitals with good nursing staffs in tropical colonies.

The report was adopted.

Mrs. Charles Hobhouse said that the work had greatly developed of late years. In the tropics, where the influence of the Association was at work, the mortality of young children had enormously decreased.

Sir John Anderson, G.C.M.G., moved a vote of thanks to Princess Henry of Battenberg, which was carried by acclamation, and Sir Claude Macdonald, who spoke of the work of the Japan Branch of the Association, from personal knowledge as its President, and others, also addressed the meeting.

The Annual Report, which was taken as read, gives some interesting details of the work of the Association, which shows its widespread influence. Further developments of the work include the supply of a Nurse Matron for the Jesselton Hospital, British North Borneo; a Nurse Matron for a new Maternity Home recently started by the Government in the Seychelles; a Matron for the Kingston Hospital, Jamaica, and the Victoria Hospital, St. Lucia; while additional nurses have been supplied for private work with the Ceylon Nursing Association, the Madrid Nursing Association, and at the Victoria Hospital, Tientsin. In the autumn the Taikoo Hospital, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, was successfully opened, and the Nurse-in-Charge has since been kept busy. From Costa Rica the Hon. Secretary reports that the Nurse has "rendered valuable service during the recent earthquakes, especially in the many surgical cases, and the *South African Church Railway Mission Magazine*, writing of one of the nurses who had completed her three years' work, said, "She has gained the affection and friendship of all about her. She leaves a big gap."

Seven nurses attended the course in Tropical Medicine during the year, and two returning from service in the Colonies were granted a post graduate course in general hospitals.

Nine additional Silver Badges for meritorious service of five years and upwards have been bestowed. Fifty Matrons and nurses in all have now received the decoration.

The report states that there is continued and ever increasing need, and a wide scope for further effort. The Committee urgently appeal for financial support from all interested in our Colonies, and in our fellow countrymen beyond the seas, so that it may be possible to extend the benefits of skilled nursing wherever in distant lands the necessity still exists.

The report of the Scottish Branch, which has interviewed and accepted seven applicants during the year, expresses the desire that it should be more widely known amongst employers and heads of shipping firms, whose interests are to some extent involved in the health of those who are working for them in distant parts of the Empire.

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