

NURSING ECHOES.

To commemorate her twenty-five years' work for the organization of the Nursing Profession in the public service, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick has received an invitation, conveyed through Miss M. Heather-Bigg, President of the Matrons' Council, to be the guest of honour at a Dinner attended by members of the Nursing Profession, at the Hotel Cecil, on December 14th. Mrs. Fenwick has accepted the invitation with pleasure.

The work under Miss H. L. Pearse, of the London County Council School Nurses, increases by leaps and bounds, as may be gathered from the report of the General Purposes Sub-Committee to the Education Committee for 1911. The report showed that during the year the doctors inspected 204,000 children at 9,785 sessions, and that 62 per cent. of the parents were present at the time of inspection. More than one-half of the children showed defects when examined in detail. One-third of the children suffered from enlarged tonsils and adenoids, and four-fifths from caries of the teeth. There were from two to three thousand cases of ringworm during the year. Nine cleansing stations for verminous children were at work, and the school nurses inspected 251,592 children, of whom 14,893 were reported to be verminous.

On the recommendation of the Joint Schools Management Sub-Committee, the Newcastle-on-Tyne Education Committee have decided to appoint two trained nurses in connection with the care of school children, and have set aside a sum of money in their estimates for next year to provide for medical inspection and treatment. The Committee are to be congratulated on their decision. The endeavour to thrust into such positions midwives with a smattering of nursing knowledge is far too common, but if the ratepayers are to be called upon to contribute to the salaries of such workers, some of them will no doubt have something to say on the question. The fact that an outbreak of diphtheria has occurred in one school in Newcastle shows the necessity for the vigilance of an experienced nurse. A midwife with a little superficial knowledge of nursing would be quite incompetent to deal with the situation. It is often not realized how specially unsuitable a combination of school nursing and midwifery is, even when the nurse is fully trained, owing to the liability of contact with infection by the nurse in the schools.

At a meeting of the London Branch of the Nurses' Social Union, held at 12, Buckingham Street, Strand, last week, at which Miss A. C. Gibson presided and proved an excellent chairman, the proposition was admirably put forward and sustained by Miss Beatrice Kent:—

That it is desirable that women should be allowed to invade the professions and occupations hitherto monopolised by men.

Miss Kent disapproved of the word "invade" as suggesting hostile entry. On the other hand, she thought it difficult to find a substitute, because it was used in connection with a "monopoly." Monopoly was a bad word, and indicated a much worse principle, because it stood for a thing which was injurious to the community. The only justification for monopoly of interests by one sex was when nature clearly indicated physical disqualification. She pointed out that there are some six professions in all—Theology, the Army, the Navy, Medicine, Law, and Teaching—and that women are excluded from the three first, with the exception that there are a few women Pastors, and she considers that there are obvious reasons why this should be the case.

The question of the admission of women to the "divers Orders of the Church" is one which would, no doubt, arouse a storm of criticism, and of protest, so long have we been habituated to their exclusion. But there seems no reason why it should not be discussed.

Space forbids our dealing in detail with this paper; but reference must be made to the fact that in Oklahoma, U.S.A., a woman, Miss Kate Barnard, is head of a State Department. She is the State Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, and has nearly 300 institutions, including gaols and penitentiaries, under her jurisdiction.

There was a lively debate.

A satisfactory balance-sheet of the N.S.U. Conference held at Bristol in June has been issued. It was not necessary to make a call on any of those who were good enough to stand as guarantors, and a profit of nearly £100 has been handed over to the Union. At the wish of the Somerset and Bristol Board this has been divided as follows:—£3 to each of the N.S.U. Branches in the Somerset and Bristol Division which subscribed, guaranteed, and generally assisted in the work of the Conference; £1 10s. to the Frome Branch, which is newly formed; £1 10s. to the N.S.U. Branch at Exeter, which sent an interesting exhibit; £20 to the Somerset and Bristol Board for general expenses; £50 to the Central Fund for general expenses

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