

A HISTORY OF NURSING.*

The third and fourth volumes of *A History of Nursing*, edited by Miss Lavinia L. Dock, R.N., which have been eagerly awaited, have now been published, and it is with feelings of reverence, admiration, and pride that we review them in these pages—reverence for the masterly grip exhibited by the author of the modern nursing movement in all parts of the world, admiration for the skill with which it has been presented to us, and pride that these epoch-making volumes are the work of a member of the profession whose honour we hold dear, and to many of whose members we are bound by the closest ties of friendship and affection.

The nursing profession is accustomed to Miss Dock's lavish generosity, and we are apt to take a good deal for granted, but we must not in the present instance allow to pass unnoticed her noble gift to the International Council of Nurses, to which no allusion is made in the volumes. Not only has she undertaken the Herculean work of compiling them, but with both hands full, in her own inimitable way, she has presented them complete and fair and with the most delightful illustrations, gathered from all four corners of the globe, to the International Council of Nurses, so that, in her own words, in a letter to this Journal, "All royalties from their sale will go to aid that Treasury . . . we should in time have a very fair income . . . which would enable us to maintain a paid secretary and to carry on international work more regularly and effectively than we can do now, when all such work is volunteer, unpaid labour."

The International Council will be pleased to receive the royalties, no doubt, but whatever paid secretary it may have in the future, the woman is not to be found who could replace our dear Hon. Secretary, Miss Dock.

Miss Dock explains in her preface that "the construction of the final volumes of the History has proceeded on somewhat different lines from those followed in the first and second volumes. The collaboration of Miss Nutting has not been possible in finishing the task, because of the demands on her work as head of the Department of Nursing and Health at Teachers' College. She has, however, with unabated interest, given help and advice in ways open to her, which we gratefully acknowledge. The editor, therefore, in undertaking an account of the modern nursing movement, has sought, and

received in abundant measure, the assistance of nurses in all those countries here dealt with. That it has been possible to do this, so easily and directly, as was the case, to meet with instant and ready response and unflinching co-operation, is one of the fine fruits of international friendship and comradeship grown from the International Council of Nurses, conceived and founded in London in 1899 by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, whose fertile genius for organization has been felt as a stimulus among nurses of almost every country of the world where modern skilled nursing has come into being. . . .

"In general, the plan followed in the selection of material (provided by the collaborators) has been to give as much fulness as possible to beginnings, and to those aspects of our subject which cannot easily be read of elsewhere. There are important aspects of modern nursing which may seem to have been slighted here, such as visiting nursing and tuberculosis work, but they have histories or records of their own. . . . The advance in self-governing organization, on the other hand, with its plea for State Registration, may be thought to have an undue share of space, but this movement is new and of great significance, resulting from the incessant efforts of women who have had no time to write down the history they have made and are busy making. . . .

"The editor assumes full responsibility for the interpretation or colour of the narrative, and for personal touches. As to the former, however, she believes that her point of view coincides with that generally held by the groups of leaders or 'progressives' in the various countries."

The only flaw in the volumes is that they contain no record of Miss Dock's marvellous share in history-making, nor is her portrait to be found within its covers. But, indeed, if justice is to be done her, she needs a volume all to herself. Next week we shall begin our review of the History in detail. M. B.

WORTHY OF THEIR HIRE.

We are glad to observe in the official report of the meeting of the Advisory Committees under the National Insurance Act, held on Thursday, January 2nd, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred in sympathetic terms to the work of trained nurses, and further said that they would confer with the body which represents the nurses before they came to any conclusion about the salaries which were to be paid. We consider that £2 10s. a week should be the minimum salary offered to the well-trained women who should be employed.

* G. P. Putnam's Sons, 24, Bedford Street, Strand, London, W.; price, £1 1s. net.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)