

NURSING ECHOES.

Queen Alexandra has given her patronage to the twenty-fourth Universal Cookery and Food Exhibition to be held at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster, S.W., from October 28th to November 1st. As usual there will be a Section in Invalid Cookery—for which entries must be sent in before October 10th—one class of which (Class 38) will be open only to trained nurses. Prizes will be awarded consisting of a gold medal, silver medals, bronze medals, cash prizes, cookery books, and certificates of merit. In Class 38 exhibitors must send an invalid tray, to contain a dish of fish or meat, light pudding or jelly or custard, and two beverages, including beef tea or a soup (four dishes in all). Other classes in this section are Class 39, an invalid tray open to all except trained nurses, Class 40, an invalid tray open to Army cooks, Class 41, open to members of the British Red Cross Society, the dishes in all these classes to be the same as in Class 38. In Class 42 competitors will send an invalid tray for vegetarians containing four meatless dishes, including soup and a beverage.

We publish in another column the first half of the paper on "The Evolution of Poor Law Nursing," read by Miss E. C. Barton at the Dublin Nursing Conference. There is so much interest in the question of Nursing under the Poor Law just now that we are sure the paper will be welcomed by many of our readers.

Mr. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board, in the course of his address on "The Relationship between Medicine and Public Health" to the International Congress of Medicine, reported in full in the medical papers, said:—

"The noble work of the medical profession in the treatment and prevention of disease would have been in large measure ineffective but for the devoted work of the nurse. In every age of the world there have been 'born' nurses, but the 'trained' nurse is a product of recent times. It is scarcely for me to sum up the qualities of the ideal nurse, but I may safely say that no amount of training will compensate if there is not also the tenderness of touch, the kindness of heart, and the desire to serve, without which the highest and best nursing cannot be secured. Personal experiences of many, if not of all of us, make us confident that paid service is not incompatible with the devotion and self-denial which we associate specially

with unpaid service, and without which skilled nursing fails in an important respect."

He then referred to the history of nursing as bound up with that of Florence Nightingale, to the impetus given for improved nursing in this country by her connection with the Deaconess Institution at Kaiserswerth, and to the endowment by her, with money given to her by the public, of the nurse training school at St. Thomas' Hospital, thus founding our modern system for the training of nurses.

Mr. Burns went on to say that "the growth of the profession of nursing is among the most striking social facts of the last thirty years. As medicine progresses and becomes more exact the need of nurses to carry out the details of medical instructions becomes more clamant. In Poor Law institutions alone some idea of progress may be gained from the statement that in 1897 the total nurses employed numbered 4,100; in 1907 they had become 6,500; in 1911 nearly 7,500; and in 1912 over 7,600," he mentioned that in a number of general and special hospitals in the United Kingdom, with an aggregate of 15,500 occupied beds, 6,083 nurses were engaged in the day and night service of these beds, *i.e.*, two nurses for every five patients.

"These numbers do not take into account the large number of nurses engaged in private nursing. Nor do they include the nurses whose work is even more closely associated than that of the institutional or private nurse with the prevention of disease. In London and the chief centres of population we have the Queen's Jubilee nurses, in many counties county nursing associations, and in nearly every parish a nurse who is engaged in helping the poor in sickness. This help does not consist solely in the valuable aid rendered at time of distress. Good district nursing also implies the teaching by example of methods of nursing and personal hygiene, which in the after-life of the assisted family are probably more valuable than the immediate aid.

"Did time permit, one might advantageously discuss the valuable work of female sanitary inspectors, health visitors, tuberculosis nurses, and school nurses, which is having important influence in reducing infant mortality, in preventing the spread of infection, and in securing a higher standard of domestic and personal cleanliness."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)