

NURSING ECHOES.

We hope there will be a good attendance at the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses on the 23rd inst., as some interesting business will be brought forward for consideration.

The National Gas Exhibition at the White City should interest nurses from a domestic point of view, and—as the comfort of sick people is after all of paramount importance—the best nurses are domesticated women. One most interesting section is the model rooms. They are presented to suit every kind of life and every type of purse—from the workman's comfortable dwelling to the rich man's mansion. It is the ultimate ambition of so many nurses to retire to a country cottage all their own, that perhaps they will find the most attractive part of the Exhibition will be the complete country cottage, which would also be suitable for a small house in the suburbs, having an economical arrangement for heating, for cooking, for hot water supply, and a tiny outside wash house with the latest gas-heated coppers. This cottage alone is worth a visit. In fact, from start to finish of the household portion, the woman's purse has been considered, for she is, after all, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the domestic establishment; and she will have reason to thank the Exhibition organisers for the care with which they have considered the cooking, heating, lighting, and ventilating problems in such a way as to save the mistress by saving her servants, and in many cases to make a small household independent of servants at all.

There is a scheme on foot in Birmingham suggested by some nurses and those interested in them, to build or acquire cottages near every large town, where nurses whose health has broken down, who are past work, and whose means are slender, may spend the rest of their lives.

A committee has been formed to raise funds for this purpose, and the hon. secretary, Miss Clarice Fallows, of "Rosevale," Penns Lane, Erdington, near Birmingham, will be glad to give particulars of the scheme or to receive offers of help.

We are all for the cottage plan where the inmates would be their own mistresses, as against the "hostel" system—the restrictions and publicity of which are so unpopular with those who have narrow means.

The real solution of the derelicts in every class of workers—is to pay them justly for their work, so that they can insure adequately, and not for a few shillings a week, and so provide for a modest independence during sickness and old age.

This is just what the public will not do. Nursing must be procured as cheaply as possible, with the consequence that the worker must, through misfortune or in old age, depend on charity or starve. Women's work is really held in contempt by the community—or it would not be so cheap.

At the opening of a three days' bazaar at Liverpool in aid of the parish nursing fund of Christ Church, Dr. Caton spoke of the excellent work of the nurses, and said that the nurses of to-day were an honour to our civilisation. Their work was severe, anxious, and responsible, and he hoped the time would soon come when they would be better paid than they were at present.

The refusal of the South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital authorities at Plymouth to permit the daughter of Mr. George Gray, a local licensed victualler, to be trained as a nurse there has raised protests from every part of the country. The only objection, as stated by Mr. W. Tarr, of Swansea, at a meeting of licensed victuallers, was that the Hospital Committee objected to the girl having to pass in uniform through her father's bar.

Mr. Albert B. Deane, secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' Central Protection Society, considers that "To argue that it is a disgrace for a nurse to be seen entering or leaving a public-house is absurd. Would the South Devon Hospital authorities refuse to send a nurse to a public-house in case of the illness of the licensee or any of his family? Hospitals are glad enough to accept financial help from those connected with the licensing trade, and none do more than licensed victuallers to further hospital work."

Incidentally many opinions have been sought by the press on this question, and inquiries at London hospitals brought out the fact that no such class distinctions ever had any weight with the authorities when application was made for posts by girls who wished to enter the nursing profession. "As a matter of fact," said one of the staff of St. Thomas' Hospital to the *Standard's* representative, "the only qualifications in most London institutions are good character and physical ability to do the work."

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