

NURSING ECHOES.

The last week has been one of great activity in all departments pertaining to the care of the sick and wounded. On Tuesday officials at the War Office were in consultation, the British Red Cross Society held a Council meeting at St. James' Palace, and, at a meeting of the City of London Branch, presided over at the Mansion House by the Lady Mayoress, it was stated that the Corporation had agreed to the use of the Guildhall as a centre for the City V.A.D.'s, and a *dépôt* for stores. The centre hall will, if possible, be fitted up as a temporary hospital. Mansions, and steam yachts for hospital purposes, and motor cars are being placed at the disposal of the Government, and help of all kinds is forthcoming.

In connection with a recent deputation from the Workhouse Nursing Association to the President of the Local Government Board, Mr. Herbert Samuel, whose object was to point out the defects in the new Poor Law Institution Orders (Nursing), the two chief speakers, Miss E. S. Haldane, LL.D., and Miss A. C. Gibson, late Matron of the Birmingham Infirmary, who urged, in regard to the acknowledged scarcity of nurses for the Poor Law Service, that the splendid training given in many of the large Poor Law Infirmarys is practically lost to the Service because the conditions under which nurses are expected to work in many of the smaller provincial Infirmarys and rural workhouse sick wards are such that nurses do not remain in the Poor Law Service, but after their three or four years' training join more attractive and comfortable branches of the work. Miss James, Guardian of Bethnal Green Union, fully confirmed this statement. The Association, therefore, urges the adoption of a system by which such nurses would be retained for a certain period to benefit the sick poor in the smaller institutions, and by which they may feel that they belong to a great national Service.

Miss Haldane specially called attention to examples of Nursing Services which had been organised to very great advantage: the Queen Victoria Jubilee Nurses, and also the nurses employed under the War Office; the Army Nursing Service had been re-organised, with a Matron-in-Chief at the head, and that system of organisation had had most beneficial results, and she said it was felt that the time had come for the Local Government Board likewise to undertake something of that kind.

Finally, attention was drawn to a resolution passed by the Executive Committee of the Association, and which had been embodied in the last memorandum submitted to the Local Government Board, by which the formation of a Nursing Service had been strongly urged, and also that, as a preliminary measure, an Advisory Committee of experts should be appointed by the Local Government Board to formulate a scheme.

This is a reform most urgently needed in the interests of the sick poor, for long advocated by this JOURNAL.

Miss Bertha M. Broadwood, Director and Hon. Secretary of the Cottage Benefit Nursing Association, writing to the *Times* on the subject of State Registration of Nurses, asserts that—

"The movements for State Registration and nursing grants are chiefly engineered by well-intentioned persons who confound social reform with Socialism, and who, abandoning the sound Liberal principle that it is wrong to degrade or pauperise our fellow creatures, and our far more arduous duty to help them to help themselves, autocratically presume to treat them as puppets to be fed, housed, nursed, inspected, superintended, compelled, coerced by the State.

"Is this what the people should submit to? Is it wise or politic to supplant initiative, voluntary effort, and private philanthropy by Government or county official ordinances and control—to multiply the inspection and invasion of British homes by jacks-in-office more regardful of well-paid posts and chances of promotion than of the free will of the inspected?"

"Those versed in human nature and the management of nurses well know the need of close local supervision to cheer and uphold them in their duties, and while checking any dereliction or excess of zeal, to guard them against temptation or danger. To supplant this sympathetic, for State, control would quickly convert many nurses into arrogant Civil servants, treating cases in a dry, hard dictatorial manner, most offensive to patients and the liberty of their homes."

That may be Miss Broadwood's experience, but her picture is a travesty of the thoroughly trained, certificated, and disciplined nurse, who, through "self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control," is quite capable of maintaining her own equilibrium.

The Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses had a very fine annual meeting at Halifax, N.S., a few weeks ago, and many important questions of interest to the nurses and their patients throughout the Dominion were well discussed. Registration, of course, came in for support. Miss Wright, the Super-

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