

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

In a synopsis of the proceedings of the Annual and Special Representative Meetings of the British Medical Association, held in Aberdeen last July, the following declaration of Policy on the State Registration of Nurses appears in last week's issue of the *British Medical Journal*.

That the Representative Body reaffirms its opinion that the State Registration of Nurses is desirable.

That it be an instruction to Council to take afresh such steps as it considers desirable in order to obtain:—

1. Unanimity amongst the various interests concerned as to the essentials of a Nurses' Registration Bill.

2. Satisfactory evidence that there is a large professional opinion in support of these essentials.

3. The support of the Government for legislation next session on the lines of these essentials.

It is therefore the clear duty of every trained nurse who realises the helpless position of the public in its relation to trained and safe nursing under the present unsatisfactory conditions, to urge every medical man she knows to support the opinion of those who compose the Representative Body of the British Medical Association.

No further evidence of the urgent necessity for registration need be advanced than the risks run by our gallant troops wounded at the front—that is to say, outside the stationary hospitals of the Expeditionary Force, the regular Military Hospitals and the Territorial Hospitals. With the exception of these hospitals, there is absolutely no guarantee whatever that sick and wounded soldiers will be nursed by trained nurses at all. Indeed, the risks they run in voluntary hospitals, at home and abroad, are a national scandal, and one, moreover, the Press with few exceptions declines to criticise, owing to the power of social influence. It is almost incredible that we should have received letters advising that this question should be hushed up until after the war!

That is not our way.

Nothing could be more snobbish and unpatriotic.

We are concerned with the comfort, recovery, limb and life saving of the sick at all times. We are doubly concerned with it in the present crisis.

We claim, and shall continue to claim, that it is the duty of the State to guarantee a standard of safe skilled nursing to the public, just as it does a safe minimum standard of

medical treatment, and that by failing to do so, it shows a lamentable lack of responsibility to the sick as a whole, and at the moment more especially towards the men risking their lives for the Empire.

Let every patriotic nurse therefore realise her duty, and work hard for the passing of the Nurses' Registration Bill next Session. Don't forget that it passed its first reading in the House of Commons last spring by a majority of 229 votes. Time and opportunity for a second reading are therefore now our right. Let each nurse work to secure it.

NURSING AND THE WAR.

Many congenial bits of work fall to the lot of trained nurses in the course of their duty, and Miss Borrett, a member of the Registered Nurses Society, is at present engaged in one which is specially interesting.

The thousands of readers of this JOURNAL who have read and re-read "Ships that Pass in the Night" and other books by its talented author, Miss Beatrice Harraden, will realise that when she was invited from America to inspect and report on the arrangements for the Refugees in Holland, a happier choice could not have been made. Owing to a serious accident, Miss Harraden had occasion to consult her medical adviser as to whether she should undertake this work, and the reply was, "Yes, if you take Nurse Borrett with you." So because the nurse can do her part, the splendid writer will no doubt be able to give to the world work of the greatest value. We congratulate both.

With that genius for being on the spot just where work and interest are centred, we learn that Miss Violetta Thurstan arrived at Lodz, where she was asked by the Russian authorities to go, just before the German advance there. Brief letters received in this country from her, show that her services, and those of Miss Grey who accompanied her, are badly needed. Three nights' sleep a week they allow themselves, otherwise they are engaged day and night in doing dressings.

A second unit of the Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service, organised by the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies, has left Edinburgh, their destination being Serbia. They were in charge of Mr. William Smith, of Aberdeen, and included Dr. K. Macphail, Glasgow; Miss M. A. Macdonald, Eskbank; Miss Mellen, Edinburgh; Miss Isabella Mitchell, Eskbank; Miss Janet Reid, Dundee; Miss K. M. Barr, Gourrock; Miss I. Horn, Glasgow; Miss Adamson, Edinburgh; Miss Jordan, Buckhaven; Miss A. M. Hunter, Glasgow; Miss Louise Fraser, Dundee; Miss E. Patrick, Glasgow; Miss Ford, Montrose; Miss Perry, Glasgow; and Mr. Camfield, Dalkeith. They were joined in London, by fifteen members of the English contingent. The women, wearing grey costumes with felt hats to match, attracted a good deal of attention.

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