

NURSING ECHOES.

The Annual Sale of the Nurses' Missionary League was held at 52, Lower Sloane Street, S.W., on Saturday last, when many useful and attractive things were on sale—comforters for soldiers, socks, shawls, and things suitable for Christmas gifts, home-made jams, Christmas cards and calendars, and other things too numerous to mention were displayed to the best advantage.

The question in the minds of Miss Richardson, the League's well-beloved Secretary, Miss Macfee, and other willing helpers was "Will buyers come this year, when claims are so many and purses light?" But as the day wore on it was evident that the question had presented itself to the members of the League and its friends, and that they were determined every effort was to be made to ensure a good result. And so, instead of any falling off, the Sale was a record one, and at its close at six o'clock Miss Richardson joyfully counted up £35, and still there was money to come in.

The League is filling a very real need in the nursing world, discovering vocations for missionary work, and fostering them when discovered, besides stimulating interest amongst those who do not themselves volunteer for active service. But the amount of organization and propaganda work which it can undertake depends on the financial support it receives, and we hope this will be freely given.

The next bit of work which the Nurses' Missionary League, with the approval of the Matrons and Chaplains concerned, is hoping to undertake, is the arrangement of meetings in some of the military hospitals, with the object of helping nurses to deal with some of the questions put to them by their patients in regard to the reasons for their afflictions.

From time to time cases are reported in the press in which patients, both in institutions and in private houses, are burned by hot-water bottles, and it cannot be too insistently impressed upon all nurses that hot-water bottles should invariably be well protected by very thick flannel covers, that they should not be too hot, and that where young babies are concerned, they should be placed under the under-blanket of the cot. The story of a baby whose death was accelerated by burns, as told to the Bradford City Coroner on October 26th, is one of the most amazing which we have ever read in this connection.

This ten days' old baby was a patient at the City Hospital, Bradford, when admitted on September 20th, as deposed by the Matron, Miss E. E. McLelland, at the inquest. On September 30th, about 4 o'clock, her attention was drawn by Nurse Ossleton to burns on the child's body and legs in the form of white blisters. The relatives of the child were not notified of the accident, the burns being first mentioned to the mother on October 18th.

Questioned by the Coroner as to the reason for not informing the relatives, she said it was left to the doctor. The Assistant Medical Superintendent stated that when informed of the burns by the Matron, he suggested out of consideration for her feelings, that the mother need not be told. Though serious in so young a child, the burns did not appear to him dangerous.

Dr. J. M. Inverarity deposed that there was a burn, 6 inches by 3 inches, on the right buttock, one $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch on the right calf, and one $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches on the left buttock, and a small one on the left heel. The bottle must have been "pretty hot" to cause them. Death was due to marasmus, following congenital weakness accelerated by burns.

Nurse Ossleton, who decided to give evidence, said that she took out a hot-water bottle which had cooled from the cot, refilled it, and laid it on a bed near the cot while she went to get the child's food. Five minutes later she found it crying, and on taking it up discovered that it was burnt. She found the hot-water bottle on the bed where she left it. The only solution that she could offer of the mystery was that a hot-water bottle might have been put near the baby by a convalescent boy, who maintained he knew nothing of the affair.

The Coroner said the case was one of the most mysterious with which he had ever had to deal. He was glad that it was the jury and not himself who had to form an opinion. It was for them to say whether they believed Nurse Ossleton or not, and whether the parents should have been informed earlier. Another point was that of the doctor not having been called in till next morning.

The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, and expressed the opinion that greater care should be exercised in the use of water bottles at the hospital. On the other points the verdict was an entirely open one.

The Coroner suggested that the Health Committee might consider the advisability of giving some instructions with regard to the information of relatives.

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