

NURSING ECHOES.

The Army Council has decided to take over the new infirmary at Barnet which was in course of erection when the war broke out. Owing to the impossibility of raising money under the existing conditions, the fine new block of buildings had to remain *in statu quo* until such time as the L.G.B. would give permission for their completion. The decision of the Army Council has therefore given mutual satisfaction, and the work is going full speed ahead, the contractors being under an obligation to complete it by June 28th. The authorities, both medical and nursing, have expressed themselves highly satisfied with the buildings, which stand high on an ideal site, and command a magnificent view of the beautiful Herts country. We are not sure that the authorities are not casting covetous eyes at the lately acquired premises known as Pickering Lodge, which are the proud possession of the Barnet Infirmary nursing staff. This is a home that indeed any nurses would covet, and the *Guardians* are to be congratulated on its acquirement instead of carrying out the costly plan of adding to the old nurses' home. It is closely adjacent to the workhouse. The house, which has always been inhabited by wealthy people, is fitted with every convenience and finely decorated. There is a large ornamental garden and tennis lawn, and although this may sound an extravagant acquisition, it was obtained on most moderate terms. It is gratifying to think that the nurses of Barnet Infirmary are now properly housed, and are correspondingly appreciative. Somehow we do not think the Army nurses will have much chance there, but there are other plans for their comfort.

At a recent meeting of the Chesterfield *Guardians* Mr. H. W. Day (Bolsover) referred to the great difficulty the Board had in obtaining charge nurses, pointing out that whenever there was a vacancy a nurse had to be engaged from a nurses' institution at an outlay of about 35s. per week. This arrangement also interfered with the training of probationers.

On the recommendation of the House Committee, it was resolved to ask the Local Government Board to allow of the payment of a bonus of £10 each to the superintendent nurse and each night and charge nurse, provided they remained with the Board twelve months.

This arrangement is to be for the period of the war only, and it was stated that it was estimated to represent a saving of £40 per annum.

A correspondent sends us the following personal experience:—

"The evening shadows are beginning to fall, and the road leading to the casual ward is becoming sprinkled with—well, the sort of people that frequent casual wards. Here an unshaven man limping with a stick; there a family—father first, of course, and what a father; mother next—what a mother—pushing the whole of the family possessions in a dilapidated mailcart; children of various ages, dirty, tired, and pathetically appealing. Finally, an old woman—how old, Heaven knows: anything between sixty and eighty. This class is so extraordinarily old at sixty, so extraordinarily young at eighty, that it is hard to judge. Her weatherbeaten face is tied round with a cotton handkerchief to protect her ears from the wind, and on her tousled head surmounting the handkerchief is a battered black bonnet. The rest of her garments *en suite*. Her boot—I speak advisedly—is of the usual apogetic class. The other foot is tied up with clouts till its shape resembles an elephant's in form and size. She is hobbling along with a stick.

Taking an interest in these, I stop and enquire of the old dame if she would not be more comfortable in the infirmary.

'Old yer tongue! Yes, I got a poisoned foot, but I got to nurse a person in 'er confinement very soon, an' she wouldn't 'ave no one but me. Next week I got to clean and white-wash 'er room ready for 'er confinement, so I mus' be back for that.'

I walk on reflectively."

It is not often that the President of a hospital makes so discriminating a speech on the work of its Matron as did Lady Pirrie, the President of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, at its recent annual meeting. Lady Pirrie herself indicated the source of her insight: "as a woman," she knew; which proves the wisdom of the governors of the institution in appointing a woman as the head of an institution so largely concerned with women's work.

In moving the adoption of the Report, Lady Pirrie said:—In addition to the treatment of civilians, she was sure it had been a great gratification to the medical, surgical, and nursing staff to have had the opportunity of nursing the gallant sailors and soldiers from active service, and to know that so many were restored to health and strength by the skill and attention they received there. They all heartily agreed with the words in the report that the doctors who, without fee or reward, give their services so freely to the great work of the

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