

recommendation that it be approved and published. It stated that the scheme for the district nursing of measles and whooping-cough referred to in the last annual report was favourably received and had met with a gratifying and public-spirited response from the District Nursing Associations. In six months two-thirds of them had already taken up the work, and eight were prepared to do so as soon as satisfactory arrangements could be made; two only had not adapted their rules to meet the requirement. Seven of the sanitary authorities concerned had, in October last, agreed to pay for the nursing of cases among the poorer inhabitants of their districts.

The Report called attention to the Order of the Local Government Board of September 23rd last, whereby substantial payments from the Maternity and Child-Welfare Grants may in future be made in aid of satisfactory arrangements for the district nursing of poor children of tender years. It also stated that the district nursing of the other diseases of young children, notably of epidemic diarrhoea and of ophthalmia neonatorum, is engaging the care of the Committee, and they have presented a special report on the last named disease.*

Each of these formidable diseases, it was stated, demands assiduous and continual nursing care, and each is consequently a heavy charge on the staffs of the Associations. At the present time the call of the war and other demands for the services of trained nurses have severely depleted the ranks of the Associations, and the ever-widening field of employment has rendered it increasingly difficult to obtain recruits for this national work. This is abundantly proved by the information obtained from twenty Superintendents of the Associations affiliated to Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses in London. The Ranyard Nurses, however, report that the increase of work has not been so great as anticipated, the occupation of hospital and infirmary beds being largely neutralised by the better conditions under which the people are living, which seem to have a marked influence upon the sickness.

The Superintendent of the South London District Nursing Association states that the applications from the London Hospitals for nurses to attend general cases in their own homes have been more than doubled, and they have been obliged to add two extra workers to their numbers. There has however been less poverty to contend with, and, latterly, less drunkenness. The comparative scarcity of medical men has increased somewhat the responsibility of the nurses.

The Report drew attention to the fact that the reports of the Superintendents modestly omit any reference to the difficulties and dangers of darkened streets and fog. The daily round of a district nurse in the poorer quarters and slums

* We propose to deal with this report in a later issue.

of London is always arduous; under the conditions of these winter months it must often have been perilous.

In conclusion the Report stated that the Directory and Guide to District Nursing in London is approaching completion, and, if trade conditions allow and satisfactory estimates for printing are obtained, it is anticipated it may be published at an early date. It will furnish at moderate price, and in a compact and portable form, a guide to the sanitary authority, the poor-law authorities and the district nursing association, concerned in dealing with the sick poor in practically every street or alley in the Metropolis.

The district nursing of insured persons is also engaging the attention of the Executive Committee, who state that they welcome any well-considered proposal to place this matter on a systematic basis.

The Report was adopted.

RESOLUTION.

The only item on the Agenda which raised any discussion was the motion of which notice had been given by Mr. David Pennant,

"That the establishment of a well-planned system for regulating the general training of nurses would assist the organization of District Nursing in London."

In moving his resolution Mr. Pennant said that this annual meeting of the Central Council for District Nursing was the only opportunity district nurses had of discussing questions of great importance in regard to the organization of the general training of nurses throughout the country. It was well known that in London the system of district nursing involved the employment of nurses with three years' hospital training, and six months' special training in district nursing. It was obvious that the efficiency of the system depended on a regular supply of efficiently trained hospital nurses.

For many years past the question of setting up a definite standard had been a subject of controversy and personal feeling. Years ago Miss Florence Nightingale was opposed altogether to the setting up of a definite standard. He thought that at that time she was right in considering that nurses and the public were not ready for a general standard of nurse training to be set up, but he did not doubt that if she were alive now she would take a different view, and would advise in the interest of nurses and the public that some general system of nurse training should be set up.

In that Council they regarded the matter from the public point of view, and a profession existed for the benefit of the public, not for their own. Professions were given powers to organise themselves for the benefit of the public. Thus, for the Bar, Benchers of the Inns of Court formed the authority; they represented the élite of the profession, and its training was given into their hands, but they did not look after the professional interests of the Bar. In the same way, professional authorities dealt with the training of the medical

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