

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF APPROVED SOCIETIES.

NURSES AND INSURANCE.

J. H. Thomas, Esq., M.P., presided at the Annual Conference of the Association of Approved Societies held at the King's Weigh Hall, London, W., on Saturday last, and in his opening address expressed the conviction that a Health Ministry was a national necessity.

The following resolution, the only one of direct importance to nurses, was passed unanimously:—

WAR SICKNESS RISKS.

"That this Conference protests against any part of the liability for War Risks being placed on the funds of Approved Societies; and claims that Insured Persons, incapacitated whilst serving the Nation, should be compensated from National Funds. This liability was not anticipated or provided for when the financial basis of the National Insurance Scheme was calculated by the Actuaries, and any money taken from the contributions of the Insured Section of the Community to meet this liability is not only unreasonable and unfair, but endangers the stability of National Insurance Funds."

In supporting it, Miss Eden, who represented the Trained Women Nurses' Friendly Society, said:—

"I desire to support the resolution on behalf of the T.W.N.F.S. This matter affects nurses in a special way, because those employed by the Army have been exempted from paying their contributions, although their society remains liable to pay benefits. The Army pays the Society at the rate of 3d. a week, but the insured person herself pays nothing. This arrangement causes a very serious and unfair drain on a society—especially a nurses' society, the members of which, by the nature of their calling, are incurring special war risks. The society which I represent has been remarkably successful in its sickness benefit, showing that a society composed of professional nurses only, if carefully administered, is not subject to the usual financial difficulties of women's societies and such a society deserves every encouragement.

"We claim, Sir, that when the sickness or disablement are caused by services rendered to the Army that the nation should pay, whether it be in the way of Pensions for permanent disablement or for temporary illness.

"Nurses have not been able to go into the trenches and fight—though I am sure they would have done so if called upon—but they have stood by the men who have done so and I am convinced that this meeting will agree that they have a claim on the country."

A resolution was also passed expressing the opinion that the Old Age Pension should be paid to all persons on attaining the age of 70, irrespective of their financial position.

THE VISION SPLENDID.

"You shall see it ended,
This mighty work to which your souls are set;
If from beyond—then, with the vision splendid,
You shall smile back and never know regret."

Would you give a little Easter gift which costs but one shilling—then get "The Vision Splendid," by John Oxenham. So much inspiration and consolation are contained in the lovely lines.

In a Foreword, the author asks: "Is the outcome of this latest world tragedy to be loss or gain? Under God, it rests with ourselves.

"The greatest world tragedy of all ended on the Cross, in what, to the men of those days seemed absolute loss; but that apparent loss has become life's greatest gain."

The loss of the material is of no matter. Our men we know are not lost, except for a brief space to us who are left.

But most of us are conscious of some gain. The heroism of our men has been rivalled by the heroic endurance with which those at home have borne their losses. It is wonderful. . . . Bruised and broken we have felt ourselves as never before in the hands of God. And this is an undoubted good. Amid all the horrors and confusions of these terrible times the soul of life is groping back to the elementals and fundamentals as the only truly staple things left. . . . Much that we held essential has vanished in the fiery furnace—God grant that we come forth from this furnace of affliction freed from our bonds and walking visibly . . . with the Son of God.

"God's Law is Right,—right doing,—Righteousness. Who breaks—pays—we broke,—in permitting amongst us and elsewhere, without protest, that which made for evil. We are paying. It is not punishment, but the simple righteous working of Inviolable Law.

"And now,—having paid in blood and tears and bitterness of woe,—now, with the Spirit of God in us, with enlightened souls and widened hearts, we may look forward to The Vision Splendid of a new-made world.

"Not only *may*—we *must*. Every act is the fruit of a thought. If we do not think good we cannot act good. If we do not think deeply now on that to which we hope to attain, we shall not be ready to act good when the time comes,—the attainment may be delayed and discounted.

"So—to The Vision Splendid of a world in which God and Right shall reign supreme,—may we all live to see it realised."

The Vision of a world redeemed from sin,
Where Christ has first cast out then entered in,
He died upon the Cross—for you and me,
And *you* have died to crown His Sovereignty.

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