

THE IRISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

At a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the I.N.A., held at 34, St. Stephen's Green, on Saturday last ninety new members were elected. The more support the Irish Nurses give to their own Association the more power it will have to further their aspirations on national lines. Every Irish nurse who loves her country and its traditions should join the I.N.A. and help to preserve them. It is only by self-governing co-operation that nurses like doctors can hope to attain to a dignified position in the body politic. When we realise what American nurses have accomplished in the space of a few years through such loyal solidarity, we must recognise that professional progress can only be attained from within, and we should do well to remember that British nurses urged by conscientious conviction associated together for the uplifting of nursing, and the better care of the sick, before our free cousins overseas took any action in this connection. The reason why the Americans have succeeded so splendidly is that in a Republic they have been free from the trammels of patronage, and economic control. They are well-educated women. They manage their own money. They own their own official press. They govern their own professional Associations, and the result is in the majority of States they have won for themselves legal status and can write R.N. after their names, and their skilled work is worth from 25 to 30 dollars (£5 to £6) a week in the open market. There is no class of "nurse" such as we have in this country, organised by a plutocratic peerage and other wealthy folks, working literally on the starvation line. For wages of £1 a week minus board, lodging, clothing and washing is a starvation wage—both for body and soul—and it is criminal that a network of this system should be permitted all over the country, and subsidised by the Government. Once trained nurses have the vote, we must tackle the whole scandal of spurious educational standards, unjust contracts, sweated wages, and the evil consequences. We plead with Irish nurses to build up a strong professional Association, strong enough to stand for human rights in the coming by and by.

NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

No. 4 of the *N.U.T.N. Quarterly* is out—a very interesting little number—specially we like Miss Maud Tipper's acrostic, "N.U.T.N." in verse, and the note from Miss E. M. Pye, "In the Devastated Provinces in France." She writes:—
"We do not get any less busy. For instance, on Monday, I arranged all my household, then went off in the car to take a woman and baby back to one of the villages, and fetch a sick woman and child from Reims, also visit two mothers and babies who had been ill in scattered villages. We got back at 8 p.m. to find an urgent wire to fetch a patient from a village about twelve miles away.

I was the only one who could go, no one else being on the permit, so off we dashed again. She was *very* bad (hemorrhage)—on a barge on the canal—impossible to look after her there; so we got her on the stretcher and I told the chauffeur to go as fast as he could. We were stopped at one place by a level crossing closed for a train. I sent the husband to try and get them to let us through—'Yes you can go "*en galoppe*,"' so we crossed at full speed *just in front* of the Paris express, not thirty yards away! I got to bed at 1 a.m. Called at 2, another case coming in, first one quiet. 4 a.m. up for good and all—sent for doctor for first patient—second requiring constant attention. 7.30 first baby born; 10 a.m. second baby born—2 p.m. 'Consultations,' nineteen babies to weigh, admire, scold, advise.

"The poverty and suffering among the *émigrés* is very bad now, and the deterioration in health in our poor mothers is very marked. We are going to try and do something about their lodgings, which are awful, but it will mean building portable houses."

Don't forget that the N.U.T.N. will be the only nurses' national organisation in England formed by individual membership—if the R.B.N.A., like a moth in a flame, is absorbed, as it will be should the Privy Council recommend the grant of the Supplemental Charter and the foundation of a Royal British College of Nursing. Trained nurses in this country never needed a Union *really* their own more than they do at the present time. For information apply to the Hon. Sec. N.U.T.N., 46, Marsham Street, London, S.W.

BEFORE THE ASSAULT.

If thro' the roar o' the guns one prayer may reach Thee,

Lord of all Life, whose mercies never sleep,
Not in our time, not now, Lord, we beseech Thee
To grant us peace. The sword has bit too deep.

We may not rest. We hear the wail of mothers
Mourning the sons who fill some nameless grave;
Past us, in dreams, the ghosts march of our
brothers,

Who were most valiant . . . whom we
could not save.

Hark, the roar grows . . . the thunders re
awaken—

We ask one thing, Lord, only one thing now;
Hearts high as theirs, who went to death unshaken,
Courage like theirs to make and keep their vow.

To stay not till these hosts whom mercies harden,
Who know no glory save of the sword and fire,
Find in our fire the splendour of Thy pardon,

Meet from our steel the mercy they desire. . .
Then to our children there shall be no handing
Of fates so vain—of passions so abhor'd . . .

But Peace . . . the Peace which passeth under-
standing . . .

Not in our time . . . but in their time, O Lord.

The late 2ND LIEUT. R. E. VERNEDE.

The Observer.

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