

NURSING AND THE WAR.

On Wednesday, April 26th, the King held an Investiture at Buckingham Palace, when His Majesty conferred the Decoration of the Royal Red Cross upon the following ladies:—

THE ROYAL RED CROSS.

FIRST CLASS.

CIVIL NURSING SERVICE—*Principal Matron*: Miss Lilian Cushon; *Matrons*: The Misses Isabel Bennett, Mildred Heather-Bigg, Alice Bird, Laura Brädburne, Mabel Cave, Elizabeth Dodds, Annie Dowbiggin, Edith Eddison, Marion Foggett, Mary Hamer, Elizabeth Hezlett, Pamela Hill, Rachel Jones, Mary McGivney, Anna Phillips, also Miss Audrey Buller.

VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT—Miss Rachel Crowdy.

SECOND CLASS.

CIVIL NURSING SERVICE—*Matrons*: The Misses Janet Amour, Jeannie Jordan, Margretta Thornton; *Lady Superintendent*: Miss Alice Kelly; *Assistant Matron*: Miss Elizabeth Bullivant; *Sisters*: The Misses Alice Alexander, Mildred Allbeury, Emma Barnes, Alfreda Blakesley, Emma Bramwell, Gertrude Bygrave, Grace Carswell, Lilian Cook, Elsie Harse, Kathleen Kennedy, Margaret Lytle, Evelyn McMunn, Monica Somers, Alice Taylor; *Staff Nurses*: The Misses Catharine Carmichael, Christina Carvel, and Elizabeth Charles.

VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT—Mrs. Dent.

The Secretary of State for War, the Earl of Derby, has circulated a letter in which he states that fully trained nurses are a most urgent need to complete hospital establishments, in order to meet the situation caused by the torpedoing of hospital ships. He appeals to Hospital, Poor Law and Institution authorities to set at liberty nurses for military service, to retired nurses to offer their services to their training-schools to enable nurses capable of undertaking the more strenuous duties of military service to be released, to those who have retired from military service to again enrol, and those free to offer their services to apply to the Matron-in-Chief.

In conclusion, Lord Derby writes:—

I cannot end this appeal without making reference to the splendid work of nurses for the sick and wounded, and to the courage and devotion to duty displayed under fire, in the field, and in mined and torpedoed hospital ships in this war. The Nursing Service has a glorious record, and I feel confident that many will now answer to the call to join a Service which has done so much for the country, and to which the country owes such a debt of gratitude.

We are glad to note the last paragraph of this appeal. It may, in part, placate the indignation of women and of professional nurses, at the omission of all reference to their "glorious record,"

at the Women's Meeting at the Albert Hall, when the Secretary of State for War eulogised with unstinting praise the services of amateur nurses.

But we must once more emphasise the fact that if Lord Derby wants a whole-hearted response to his appeal, he must insist upon the elimination of the "Serf" Clause in the Agreement which trained nurses have to sign with the War Office, when joining the Reserve of the Military Nursing Service, and the Territorial Force Nursing Service.

THE "SERF" CLAUSE.

6. If I in any manner misconduct myself or shall be (otherwise than through unavoidable illness or accident) unfit in any respect for service under this agreement, of which misconduct or unfitness you (Lord Derby) or your authorised representative (Sir Alfred Keogh) shall be the sole judge, you shall be at liberty from and immediately after such misconduct or unfitness, to discharge me from further service hereunder, and thereupon all pay and allowances hereunder shall cease.

If the Nursing Service has won for itself the "glorious record" stated by Lord Derby, by what right are its members compelled to sign an Agreement of this insulting, tyrannical and unjust character?

We do not know for certain who drafted it, but every member and official of the Army Council, the Nursing Board, Q.A.I.M.N.S., and the Advisory Council, T.F.N.S., have condoned it, and are to blame for its enforcement.

Private Nurses working on the co-operative system should be paid their usual fee, the business they have built up will not then be ruined, and these hard working women left unprovided for at the end of the war. After all their fee of £2 2s. a week would not amount to that paid to the members of the Canadian, Australian, and South African Military Nursing Services—and when every youthful medical practitioner gets twice as much and more—the country would not grudge better pay to its experienced and highly qualified nurses.

An urgent appeal is being made for healthy, well educated women between seventeen and fifty to act as "V.A.D.s" at home and abroad. Many more are required than now apply. Now that the war has been raging for nearly three years many women can no longer afford to volunteer for service. War probationers are well paid for unskilled service, but the work is much more strenuous than was expected. Also much of the glamour of war nursing has worn off. Those still desirous of serving their country in Voluntary Aid Detachments should apply to the Director, Women's Section, National Service Department, St. Ermin's Hotel, S.W.

A contingent of the nursing staff of the Harvard Unit (U.S.A.) in charge of the Matron Mrs. Hagar

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