

NURSING ECHOES.

The King has approved of the appointment of the Dowager Countess of Airlie as Vice-President of the Nursing Board, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, in succession to the Dowager Countess Roberts, who has resigned.

We hope our readers will carefully study this week's Editorial, "Clean up England," as we are not satisfied that the nursing profession as a whole is doing its duty in so far as the problem of venereal disease is concerned. Helping to win the war, much false sentiment, and lack of a strong lead from within and without the Training Schools generally, accounts, no doubt, for the hesitancy on the part of trained nurses to take a really active part in fighting this repulsive group of diseases, which continue to devastate the national health to an incalculable degree.

Progress, however, is being made, and we would ask all those who realise the vast importance of stamping out venereal disease—and this must be our aim—to conscientiously acquaint themselves not only with its pathology, but with preventive and remedial methods. In this connection we once put forth the suggestion of giving scientific instruction throughout the land by practical demonstration—that by caravan an exhibit might be shown in every village, and explained by trained Health lecturers. Thus by poster and models young men and maidens might be brought to realise the dangers of infection, its horrible results, and how to avoid it. Nothing teaches and convinces the ignorant so well as "seeing for themselves," and the spread of infection is largely due to ignorance. Show a man a face without a nose, or staggering to his grave with locomotor ataxy; show a woman a wizened, stillborn child, or a blind baby, and tell them just why such tragedies occur, and how far they are responsible for them; and then tell them how they can avoid this wreckage, and half the battle would be won. Books, pamphlets, tracts, all are good, but the human subject, the coloured poster, and coloured model, handled by the sympathetic lecturer, make more impression. If people are startled and horrified—why not? If they are impressed by the teaching and made to realise the criminal result of their apathy—so much the better.

The fact that, with few exceptions, there are

no venereal wards attached to our large general hospitals has been the reason of much ignorance upon the part of well-educated nurses. They have not had an opportunity of accurate clinical instruction or practical experience—and there has been much prejudice concerning the whole matter. When we went as Matron to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1881, the Wards Magdalen and Lazarus were doing an excellent bit of national service. Patients suffering from venereal disease in all its most horrifying forms were admitted—presided over by one of the most refined—as she was one of the most devoted Sisters of the people in the world. In 1881 "old Sister Magdalen" had spent a quarter of a century at "Bart's" in the service of "them hussies and vagabonds," as an old Governor once described them when expressing the opinion that "our young Matron should not be called upon to associate with harlots!" And how impossible it was to make him realise that these were sick people, patients needing scientific remedial treatment—not *punishment*. What a bugbear morality has always been in thinking clearly and acting charitably in so far as this class of disease is concerned! Even then, nearly forty years ago, "old Sister Magdalen" was most hopeful about the ultimate stamping out of disease. "The ravages of syphilis were far more horrible in my youth," she would say; "such heartbreaking sights you will never see."

Her sitting-room at the top of the block was very bright and sunny, and here we spent many a happy hour learning the past history of her special work. Sometimes Theresa, Countess of Shrewsbury, a lovely, sympathetic woman, who visited the wards, would join us at tea, and after one specially tragic experience, we remember her exclamation:

"My dear, but for the grace of God we might have been as one of these!"

That is true.

Do not let us forget it.

Many are sinned against—not all are sinners.

For some time past it has been under the consideration of the Executive Committee of the Bury Branch of the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses to ask that an annual collection should be made in the mills and workshops in aid of the general fund. A decision to act upon this suggestion has been reached, the difficulty of the times and sacrifices that have had to be made by all classes in consequence of the war being fully realised. The need of more money to meet the increasing

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