

THE V.A.D. QUESTION.**GENERAL SERVICE MEMBERS.**

Sir Arthur Stanley, Chairman of the Central Joint V.A.D. Committee, is appealing for a large waiting list of suitable applicants for General Service V.A.D. members, as it is anticipated that in the near future large demands will be made to that Committee in connection with the British Red Cross Society, the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and the Territorial Force Association.

On enquiry at Devonshire House, however, we find that the authorities are not in favour of general appeals for a waiting list, and, in support of their point of view, they state that in response to about 15,000 applications through the National Service Department only about 500 applicants were placed, and in the first year of the war approximately 3,000 offered in response to a public appeal and only 221 were placed.

CO-ORDINATION NEEDED.

It is considered that this proves a considerable waste in energy and organisation, and the view held at Devonshire House is that, like the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, the general service members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments should be recruited under the War Office through a Government Department such as the Ministry of Labour, and that such a method would prevent overlapping, waste, and disappointment, as recruiting would then be on requirements instead of for a waiting list; that women are needed badly in other departments, and it is not fair to hold them up. If the two biggest organisations, the W.A.A.C. and the V.A.D. Department, were to co-ordinate the rest would come in. Dame Katharine Furse, Commandant-in-Chief, has been desirous for some time of securing organisation on these lines, but so far has received no support from 83, Pall Mall, in this respect.

INTERNAL REFORMS.

Certain internal reforms are also desired, the principal being—

(1) That members who are whole-time workers in auxiliary hospitals should have allowances to cover cost of board, lodging, washing and travelling.

(2) That members should, as a right, be given concession tickets when going on leave.

Members holding First Aid and Home Nursing certificates do get concession tickets, but general Service members—clerks, store-keepers, cooks, &c., do not.

Also the members of the W.A.A. Corps have their uniform supplied to them free of cost, and are entitled to a free medical examination; these the V.A.D.s provide for themselves.

It is considered that the terms offered to W.A.A.C. members are better than those offered to V.A.D. General Service members, and that if they were equal it would be easier to recruit the latter.

Meanwhile the report of Mr. Bridgeman's Committee is still not forthcoming.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

The Quarterly Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland was held at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., on Friday, November 9th, at 4 p.m. Previously a number of the members visited the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum in Wigmore Street, W.

THE WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM.

The extent, the wonder, and the comprehensiveness of this extraordinarily interesting Museum founded by Mr. Henry S. Wellcome in 1913, cannot be adequately described in a few words. A high entrance fee might well be charged in view of its great educational value, and yet Trained Nurses are allowed to enter and roam about it from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., quite free of charge, and every member of the Nursing Profession resident in London should take the first opportunity of going to see it. It is a permanent museum and is the result of many years of careful selection and collection from many parts of the world. We were obliged to hurry through the mazes of galleries and halls. Entering from Wigmore Street, we were confronted with the hideous effigies of witch doctors in the Hall of Primitive Medicine. Close scrutiny was not necessary. Charms and amulets used by these weird gentlemen are very numerous and wonderful. The picture gallery of oil paintings is of special interest, and among them there is one representing ether being used as an anaesthetic for the first time in a London Hospital in December, 1846. The first time that it was used in the history of medicine was October 16th, 1846, at the Massachusetts General Hospital, U.S.A. Other pictures of interest are: The discovery of quinine in 1820; the discovery of the stethoscope, 1815; Dr. Jenner's first experiment of vaccination in 1796; the great Greek physician, Hippocrates, instructing his disciples under the famous plane tree in the island of Cos, where he was born in 460 B.C.; Ambrose Paré, the great French surgeon, applying the ligature when amputating a leg on the battlefield in 1552; Joseph Priestly, who discovered oxygen about 1765, and many others. There are besides several excellent models of hospital wards and rooms, showing medical and nursing treatment in mediæval times, including a lying-in room of the 16th century; also the gloomy laboratory of an alchemist of the 16th century and an old chemist's shop. We longed to linger everywhere in this fascinating exhibition, but time did not permit.

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