

NURSING ECHOES.

The Right Hon. Dr. C. Addison, M.P., Minister of Reconstruction, addressing a meeting held on Saturday last at the Central Hall, Westminster, under the auspices of the Faculty of Insurance, said that health is power, and one of the vital matters after the war is that we should increase the productive capacity of the nation. We should only get the best work out of people by employing them under the best conditions, and to secure these we should have a central authority which would concern itself with matters affecting diseases, their origin and treatment. It was obviously necessary that such an authority should have power to deal with matters affecting sanitation, water supply, food, and housing, the last-mentioned being one of the most important elements in the health problem. Then there were the functions of the insurance committees as they affect health, and the branch of the health service connected with the poor law. He was quite sure that we were not entitled to label ill-health poverty; health was something quite different to destitution. Moreover, when our soldiers came home debilitated and under the charge of the Ministry of Pensions, public opinion would not consent to their being labelled paupers. But we could not afford not to make the best use of poor law infirmaries. A good hospital could not be scrapped because hitherto it had been called a poor law hospital.

The first thing was to get your central thinking departments on the right lines, and in this connection there must be a great measure of decentralization. Then there must be a sufficient amount of agreement. Parliament had no time now to carry through a highly controversial Bill. Dr. Addison said that as Minister of Reconstruction it was his business to work with Government Departments. He did not think departmental rivalries bulked large in a big issue.

At the end of the war the burden thrown on the health authorities would be unprecedented. We ought by that time to have our machine in order for dealing with the burden.

He emphasised as things which should be thought out and arranged before the end of the war:—

- (1) The whole question of hospital organization.
- (2) The whole question of the nursing and midwifery profession.
- (3) The whole question of the relations of the State health administration and the medical profession.

An interesting ceremony took place in the Bute Ward of King Edward VII's Hospital, Cardiff, on Tuesday, November 20th, when Lady Thomas of Ynshir presented the "William James Thomas" medals for efficiency in nursing to three members of the nursing staff. Lord Aberdare presided, and supporting him on the platform were Sir William James Thomas and Lady Thomas, Sir Isambard Owen and Lady Owen, and Colonel Bruce Vaughan, who read a letter from the Chairman of the Board of Management, General H. H. Lee, who was prevented by illness from being present, and who wrote that that day's function would mark a departure of the greatest importance to their nursing staff.

Colonel Bruce Vaughan said it was the first time in the history of the hospital that such valuable prizes and incentives to achievement had been given for skill in the theory and practice of nursing. These medals, which had been designed by Miss Lindsay Williams, a Welsh artist, were only one more evidence of the deep interest of Sir William James Thomas in the efficiency and quality of the work in that hospital. They had always paid attention to the careful training of the nurses, and that reward for merit would enable them to raise the standard of nursing throughout the Principality.

The winners were:—Gold medal, Miss Edith C. Hooper; silver medal, Miss Evelyn S. Tregaskis; bronze medal, Miss Hilda C. Evans. Miss Tregaskis, who has entered a military hospital in the North, was unable to be present.

Lady Thomas, in presenting the prizes, said she had a personal interest in them, as she thought she had worked as hard for them as the nurses.

In reply to correspondents, Edith Cavell Homes for Nurses, where they can receive hospitality, rest, and fresh air, are open at Coombe Head, Haslemere, and at Raven House, Adderley, near Market Drayton. Nurses should communicate with the Lady Superintendents.

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will see candidates for service in France with the French Flag Nursing Corps, on Saturday, December 1st and 8th, from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m., at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., or by appointment. Candidates must hold a certificate of three years' training from a general hospital, age between twenty-five and thirty-five, have good health, and speak some French.

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