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PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE NURSING WORLD IN 1917.

During the past year the energies of the trained nurses of the United Kingdom have been absorbed in the performance of their own practical work for the sick and wounded, at home and abroad, and in the question of legislation providing for their registration by the State. The action of the College of Nursing, Ltd., which has established a voluntary Register for which it desires to obtain State Protection, giving it the monopoly of control over the Registered Nurses in the United Kingdom, has emphasised the need for the Societies associated together in the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses, to protect the nurses from undesirable legislation.

THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE.

One of the results of the appalling wastage of the life of the manhood of the country, owing to the war, has been that attention has been concentrated on the means of saving life, and raising the standard of health at home. The formation of a Ministry of Health cannot long be delayed, and no individual or departmental interests should be permitted to stand in the way of so imperative a measure, which fundamentally is concerned with securing to the mass of the people adequate housing, good sanitation, and sufficient food, while disseminating a knowledge of the laws of health; and the consequent reduction of disease to a minimum, by raising the general standard of health through increased power of resistance to disease, and clean living, in all classes of the community.

Many other interests, such as physical culture, national insurance, the care of school children, will be focussed under this Department, whose objects should be primarily the prevention, and secondarily, the cure of disease. In both of these the trained nurse is an essential agent, if the greatest good possible is to be

achieved. The work done by district nurses and school nurses in the prevention and elimination of such diseases as ophthalmia neonatorum, and scabies, and in the reduction of the mortality from measles and whooping cough, are cases in point. To no one does the vista of hope opened up by the possibilities of such a Department gleam more brightly than to trained nurses and midwives, saddened by the sight and knowledge of unnecessary suffering and remedial disease.

THE HEROISM OF NURSES.

The nurses of the Imperial Naval and Military Nursing Services, with those of the Dominions beyond the seas, have throughout the year maintained its high traditions, and in bombarded hospitals, in torpedoed ships, and in other circumstances of danger, their heroism and courage have been superb.

HONOURS FOR NURSES.

During the year the newly instituted Order of the British Empire, the Military Medal, and, in numerous instances, the Royal Red Cross, have been conferred on members of the nursing profession. They have also frequently been mentioned in dispatches. Members of the Military Nursing Services, including those of the Dominions, members of Voluntary Aid Detachments, and special probationers in military hospitals are also entitled—under similar conditions—to wear the thin stripe or stripes of gold braid which officers and men, wounded in any of the campaigns since the war began, have a right to wear.

The latest honours, in the award of which nurses are included, are the Star of Mons, for all officers and men of the British and Indian Forces, and nurses, who served in France or Belgium between August 5th and November 22nd, 1914; and the right to wear the red and blue chevrons referred to in another column.

These honours are well deserved, for the services of trained nurses in helping to restore to health "those who have fought in freedom's cause" are immense and unforgettable.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)