

NURSING ECHOES.

We are not surprised that hundreds of trained nurses, including matrons "living in," are disappointed to find that they are not qualified for the Vote.

The Parliamentary franchise for women (not being University electors) is based on the occupation of land or premises, save in the case of the wife of a man entitled to be registered as a local government elector. As the Matron, Sister, and Nurse are not occupiers, as owners or tenants, of the hospital or infirmary, they are not entitled to be registered as Parliamentary electors.

But just a moment. What has the nursing profession as a whole done to win and deserve a vote? With the exception of a few hundreds out of at least 60,000 members, during the whole historic fight for political freedom they never lifted a finger or paid a penny to get it. We led the majority of Nurses' Sections in all the great processions in London, always just a sprinkling of courageous, liberty-loving women. The rest were too apathetic or timorous to come out and support the demand for nurses' enfranchisement. Now some of the very women who were too "genteel" to play a woman's part are grouching because Parliament has not made some special provision for their welfare. As a profession they failed to demand justice. They were not there when the division bell rang. "What the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve for," and what is not thrust under the nose of the politician can be safely ignored.

The Editor of this JOURNAL is to have two votes—one as wife, and one as a business woman—so for once hard work is to receive recognition.

Sunday, May 12th, was the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, and many passers-by paused at her statue in Waterloo Place, S.W., on the plinth of which was hung a handsome laurel wreath, with a cluster of leaves of a larger species at the top, with which bows of scarlet ribbon were mingled, with wide flowing scarlet streamers. The wreath bore the following inscription:—"Nightingale School, St. Thomas' Hospital. In Remembrance, and with Love, from her past and present Probationers. May 12th, 1918."

Not so many years ago a wealth of flowers adorned this statue on May 12th. Have the exigencies of war reduced their number to the solitary one from the Nightingale probationers,

or is the "remembrance" of the Queen of Nurses becoming dimmed? Surely not.

We are glad to note that the London County Council are proposing to raise the salaries of the female nursing staffs at mental hospitals under their control. At the meeting of the Council on May 14th the Asylums and Mental Deficiency Committee presented a report on the subject, in which they pointed out that in July, 1913, the late Asylums Committee effected alterations in the remuneration and condition of engagement of nurses, but this had not resulted in attracting a sufficient number of suitable candidates. On January 22nd of the present year the Council approved the grant of 5s. a week war wages to all the women members of the resident staff (with the exception of Matrons and Assistant Matrons), in place of the war allowance of £5 a year. The reasons urged for this consideration were the unattractiveness of the work, the lack of candidates, and the necessity to encourage the senior nurses to remain in the service. These reasons still operate.

The proposals of the Committee are that the salaries of probationers shall start at £24. At the end of twelve months' service, on confirmation, they shall have an increase of £4 per annum, with the rank of second-class nurse, with an annual increase of £3, maximum £34. On appointment as first-class nurse and night nurse a commencing salary of £36, rising in two years to £42. On appointment as special charge nurse a commencing salary of £44, rising to £50 in two years; and, as Head Nurse, £52, rising in two years to £60, with board, lodging, washing, and uniform.

In addition it is proposed, from April 1st for the duration of the war, and until six months after the declaration of peace, to give to all members of the permanent female staff, including the nurses, Assistant Matrons, and Matrons, a war bonus of 7s. a week.

The duties of nurses in mental hospitals are very responsible and onerous, and conscientious and successful mental nurses should be well paid.

At the Annual General Board of Governors of the General Hospital, Nottingham, the President, Mr. Player, announced that on retiring from the presidency he would like to have the opportunity of endowing another bed, to be associated with the names of his wife and his daughter, the latter of whom had worn nurse's uniform for two years. He had handed a cheque for that purpose to the secretary. He

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