

VISITING NURSING IN CHICAGO.

The Annual Report of the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago is always one of the most interesting of the many we receive, and the twenty-ninth is quite up to sample.

In her greeting to the Members and Guests of the Association at the Annual Meeting, the President, Mrs. Aldis, gave a general survey, which she prefaced with the remark that the war and the epidemic had shown conclusively that if sick and disabled bodies were to be made whole, expert nursing as well as expert medical care was necessary. The war had emphasised the precariousness of health, and there was present, as never before, a determination to try to secure health, in so far as it might be purchasable by money or obtained by effort. Scientists would say that knowledge was ahead of practice.

She then referred to the plan outlined to the Directors two years ago by Miss Foley, the Superintendent, after consultation with leading physicians, for the scientific after-care of children afflicted with infantile paralysis. The plan arranged for a group of specially trained nurses to do nothing else but care for these children, the long, slow process of muscle training taking much time and patience. Nine nurses are now on this special duty, seven specially supported by the generosity of individual givers.

Miss Foley was appointed a member of a commission to investigate the question of health insurance, which should make a report which might be used as a basis for possible legislation in Illinois. She was asked to make a special report of nursing conditions in Illinois with reference to resident and visiting nurses, in which she said: "Sickness in any household is a disorganizing element. It may instantly decrease income; it almost invariably increases expenditure. The report suggests that an extension of visiting nurse service might well be extended to many more families who need skilled nursing help, but whose incomes will not allow them the exclusive use of a trained nurse.

In response to the great demand for nurses specially trained in public health work, Mrs. Aldis reported a plan recently inaugurated by the Chicago Chapter of the American Red Cross. Fifteen thousand dollars have been appropriated for the purpose of giving a three months' intensive training course in public

health nursing to a selected group of young women in the third year of their hospital course. The Red Cross bears the expense of their living, tuition, &c., during this period. Twenty-five young women began this course in February. It is expected by the Red Cross that these women will take positions in public health work in the State of Illinois for at least a year after graduation.

Mrs. Aldis paid a tribute to the care taken by Miss Foley of the nurses during the influenza epidemic. "She realised that a sick staff could not take care of sick patients, and that by watching over the staff she made it possible for many hundreds of patients to be cared for."

The Nurses' Committee report that they have at the present time three coloured nurses on the staff, two of whom are real V.N.A. veterans. All three are graduates of Provident Hospital, and this hospital is justified in feeling proud of the material which they have trained.

We commend to the Association of Hospital Matrons in this country the standard of ethics of their colleagues in the United States. The Visiting Nurse Association in Chicago is well known as a model of organization which is often copied. We read: "The following quotation is only one of the many which we receive constantly from other organizations: 'I am enclosing our new circular of information, which is copied almost entirely from yours. We have taken the privilege of using Miss Foley's Manual and your Standing Orders and method of work quite generously as our models.'"

PROFESSIONAL APATHY.

In reply to a letter to some twenty-five Hospital Matrons, asking that a representative of the R.B.N.A. might place its views on the two Registration Bills before the nursing staff, a curt refusal was received from all but two—King's College and the General, Birmingham, being the exceptions and no doubt these refusals will be commented upon later in the official organ of the R.B.N.A.

In the meanwhile it is interesting to report that at the meeting at King's College Hospital, of the staff, one probationer represented the large staff of Sisters and Nurses and there were a few outsiders; and at the General, Birmingham, an audience of seventeen, including outsiders, were present on Monday evening when Miss Isabel Macdonald and Miss Jentie Paterson attended from London to discuss the present crisis in the Nursing Profession, and, although those present listened attentively, and apparently with approval, no questions of any sort were forthcoming.

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