

THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE CENTENARY AT THE ABBEY.

On Wednesday, May 12th, the Centenary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the Dean of Westminster will give an address at Evensong in the Abbey, at 3 p.m. Seats will be reserved for members of the Nursing Profession. Tickets for these seats may be obtained on application to the Matron, St. Thomas's Hospital, S.E. 1, before May 10th, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

NURSING ECHOES.

The 12th of May is indeed an historic day in the annals of nursing. On that date, in 1820, was born the great founder of scientific nursing—Florence Nightingale, the patron saint of nurses. Just a hundred years after that date, in 1920, the first General Nursing Council has been appointed, and those of us who form it cannot do better than apply the great fundamental principles of nursing she defined, as the basis of the Council's work in building up the Profession of Nursing.

We are glad to note that by the will of the millionaire, Mr. Howard Morley, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses will receive a legacy of £1,000.

About this time of year the County Nursing Associations hold their annual meetings over the country. We note the same cry from them all—a great scarcity of nurses for district work. The inevitable has happened. Firstly, these well-meaning but unprofessional associations undermined the standard of nursing of the three years' trained nurse, and for the sake of cheapness, largely superseded her by the uneducated midwife, with a few months' hospital nursing experience—we do not consider it training in the true sense of the word—and then the salaries offered are not sufficient to tempt either class of worker, and the vain hope that V.A.D.s are going to fill the breach, and do arduous and dull district work (we don't think it dull, but they do, after all their foreign service, and fulsome press prattle), is a veritable will o' the wisp, and a very good thing, too!

Cornwall County Nursing Association is seriously perturbed over the shortage of nurses, Sir A. May stating at the annual meeting last week that it had been hoped that when nurses and V.A.D.s were released from war service there would have been no difficulty in finding among the trained nurses women who would

carry out their plans for providing efficient midwifery, service for ante-natal work among mothers, school nursing, and health visiting, as well as the routine work associated with district nursing, and also that they would offer themselves for special training and subsequent employment in the county. On the other hand, the reality had been very different. The trained nurses were most unwilling to undertake any branch of district nursing, especially midwifery. They considered that in the past the salaries had been insufficient for the heavy work they were called upon to do, and they had no difficulty in getting well-paid posts with less responsible work and shorter hours. Semi-trained and untrained women were unwilling under present conditions to submit to either the necessary training or discipline. It was reported that new associations had been started in six towns. The total number of districts in the county was 108, employing 132 nurses, of whom ten were Queen's nurses or their substitutes. Does this mean that the remaining 122 were not thoroughly trained district nurses?

The Guild of Health—one of the objects of which is to study the influence of spiritual upon physical well-being—is arranging a special meeting for nurses in June at the Caxton Hall on the subject of "The Mental and Spiritual Factors in the Healing of the Sick." This is a subject in which many nurses are deeply interested. They can learn more of the work of the Guild by applying to Miss Rogers, the Organising Secretary, 6, York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C. 2.

We have the greatest faith in the power of the professional press, and have great pleasure in again receiving our exchange copy of the *Nursing Journal of India*, suspended in June, 1919. Evidently the nurses of India don't feel like doing without it. The present issue contains a full account of the Nursing Conference held in Delhi at the beginning of the year, at which a resolution in the following terms was passed: "That this conference is of the opinion that State Registration of Nurses in India is essential to the protection of the trained nurses, and also to the further development and uplift of the profession." The action of the home Government on this matter should be a strong argument for justice to the nurses of India. Our sisters in India have two professional organisations, through which they should be able to attain legal status. Let them do as we did draft a Bill, and give the Government no peace till it becomes law.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)