

### NURSING ECHOES.

A meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland will be held, by the kind invitation of Miss Winmill, the Matron, at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, Surrey, on Saturday, 18th inst., at 3 p.m.

Tea will be served after the conclusion of the business meeting in the garden, if the weather is favourable, and the wards of the Hospital will be open to the visitors after tea. Members of the Matrons' Council are asked to notify Miss Winmill whether they hope to attend.

The monthly meeting of the London Branch of the National Union of Trained Nurses will be held on Saturday, September 11th, at 3 p.m., at 46, Marsham Street, S.W.1.

One can scarcely take up a paper nowadays without the question of the shortage of nurses cropping up. To mention a few instances.

Miss G. Wolseley Lewis, writing in the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, says in part:—

"Action and reaction are equal and opposite. I wonder whether this fact entirely accounts for the dearth of candidates for the nursing profession. During the war, from the countess to the kitchen-maid, everyone seemed to be engaged in some form of hospital work. Now, after two years of peace, the shortage of nurses throughout the country is a serious and urgent problem to those who are in any way responsible for the care of the sick. This shortage will be felt even more when the Ministry of Health is fully organised, and when many posts dealing with preventive work all over the country will be open to members of the nursing profession.

"The work should appeal to women of education, seeing that it is a work of national importance. Nothing can be more essential than the health of the people, and as medicine becomes more and more preventive as well as curative, nursing follows in its steps.

"Almost all professions are now open to women, but I believe nursing is the one which will be found to be the most satisfying, and also the one in which there is the best chance of excelling. My reason for saying this is that no other work that a woman can undertake appeals so naturally to the maternal instinct implanted in us. Nursing is work eminently worth doing, and it will be a great loss, if, just at this juncture, there is any shortage of capable well-educated women to fill the ranks of the profession."

At Hayes, Middlesex, the Rector, the Rev. E. R. Hudson, who presided at a meeting of subscribers convened to consider the position

in regard to the Hayes District Nursing Association, said:—"We are without a secretary; most of the lady members of the committee have resigned; we have no treasurer, and are without a nurse. It must be for the trustees now to deal with the matter. I think it is far better for us to finish with it. It is impossible to continue the Association in its present form."

Ultimately a resolution was passed stating the opinion of the meeting that it was impossible to work the Association any longer on the lines hitherto adopted, and suggesting that the trustees be requested to inform the committee what steps should be taken to bring the work of the Association, as at present constituted, to a close.

At Chatburn, where evidently the resident nurse system has been the rule, Mrs. Assheton, President of the Chatburn Nursing Association, occupied the chair at an adjourned meeting, and said that it was quite out of the question to continue the present system. Nurses absolutely refused to take up that kind of work. They would not do housework and live in, desiring rather to do district work. Another member of the committee stated that headquarters were unable to offer any suggestions. A resolution was carried to dissolve the Association.

The alternative of providing a district nurse was considered, the chairman expressing the opinion that "a district nurse was better than no nurse at all," and that "the difficulty was in getting a woman to do the skilled work as well as the housework," and it was resolved to form a district nursing association providing that ways and means could be found, but after further discussion a resolution was carried that "as there did not appear to be any ways and means the scheme be allowed to lapse for the present."

At Stroud, Miss Berks, the Superintendent of the Stroud and District Nursing Association, has resigned this position, which she has held to the satisfaction of all concerned for twenty-one years. Recently, in addition to district nursing and child welfare work, there has been added a scheme of school inspection and health visiting under the County Council. After endeavouring to work the scheme, it has been found that the additional duty exacts too much from the nurses, who have also resigned, thus bringing the work to a close, which is very regrettable from every point of view.

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