

exists there with her 120 dollars a month and a fine Ford car was in somewhat sharp contrast to the conditions under which the English nurses work. Mrs. Breckinridge said that, in America, State Registration had long been in force and the standard of qualification held by the American Public Health Nurses was a very high one.

In France the position was in certain respects quite desperate; Infant Welfare Work was not organised and there were no statistics of any value. The nurses are not trained in the sense that English and American nurses use the word. There are certain institutions in France which are regarded as Training Schools for nurses, but, while they may be quite good as regards theory, they are useless for the acquirement of any practical knowledge of nursing. The best nurses in France for the great work of saving the children are those trained in Dr. Hamilton's Hospital in Bordeaux.

Two types of village have to be dealt with in the scheme of Welfare Work in the devastated districts. There is the village which lies immediately behind the old battle line and there is another which, during the war, was occupied by the enemy; in the latter the condition, as regards the children, is very bad. Their health has been more or less permanently damaged. In both cases the children have usually had a bad start because there has been a great lack of protein and fat in their diet. Supplementary feeding is usually necessary, owing to the fact that the mothers have been so badly nourished, and a scheme of affiliation between milk stations has been established.

Mrs. Breckinridge spoke feelingly of the results which it was hoped to achieve through the organisation which she directs. The babies, whose health and lives they were labouring to save, were the children of the peasants of France, and she found great inspiration in the remembrance that the sons of the French peasantry had contributed enormously to the evolution of the world, many had become great scientists, others had become statesmen and soldiers of the highest rank. She regarded the women who were interesting themselves in the salvation of the children of the French peasant classes as real citizen mothers. Cornelia had frequently, throughout the ages, been held up as a model mother. Mrs. Breckinridge said that Cornelia came second to those citizen mothers she spoke of because she cared only for her own, not for the little children abandoned by the Roman mothers. Modern women had got beyond Cornelia; they were trying to gather under their care the little children of the world.

In the course of discussion, Mrs. Breckinridge gave an account of what a nurse could do in her third year in the American hospitals. There nurses can exercise a choice as to the special training they will receive and the course on social service is one of the greatest value to nurses intending to take up Public Health work.

Miss Elliott, in thanking Mrs. Breckinridge for the remarks, said that those present had gained many fresh ideas, and congratulated her on the

splendid work which she had achieved. Miss Elliott also alluded to the pleasure which it gave the nurses to have among them the Lady Hermione Blackwood and referred to the great debt which all nurses of the United Kingdom owe to the Dufferin family for the help always so freely rendered during the long fight for their professional status.

### CONFERENCE OF WOMEN COUNCILLORS.

Under the auspices of the Women's Local Government Society, a Conference of women—Town, Metropolitan Borough, and Urban District Councillors, was held on Tuesday, November 16th, at 10.30—1 p.m. and 2.30—4.30 p.m. The Metropolitan Asylums Board courteously lent their fine Council Chamber for the purpose. The Right Hon. Sir W. H. Dickenson, K.B.E., presided over the morning session. The opening address on "Economy in Local Government Expenditure" was given by Alderman Sir William Glyn-Jones, Middlesex County Council. The whole of the address was interesting and instructive. *A frugal and judicious expenditure is what is really meant by economy*, said the speaker, and he went on to show that this was largely lacking, the reason being, he argued, that there are not sufficient men and women who are willing and capable to give time to the work; lack of economy could often be traced to that fact.

The speaker was strong on the point of economy *in detail*; his experience of women councillors was that they do the work much more seriously than men, and in the opinion of the chairman they are superior to men in detail work. No doubt the seventy women present (or about that number and among them five trained nurses) were greatly encouraged by these remarks, and no doubt every woman present could have echoed the words of Sir William Glyn-Jones when he said of the great and important work of Local Government: "The more I know about it, the less competent I feel." He and others said much about the absence of the interest of the ratepayers. In summing up his remarks, the speaker laid great stress upon the two main things which seriously hinder good Local Government, namely (a) *the apathy of the ratepayers*, (b) *the lack of efficient and capable men and women*.

The subject of the afternoon's discussion was "The Woman Councillor and Committee Work," opened by Miss Smee, Chairman of the Acton Urban District Council, who gave a very interesting and enlightening speech. The following ladies joined in the discussion:—Miss B. Cartwright, C.C., T.C., J.P., Mrs. Dow, Met.B.C., Miss Kilgour, M.A., Miss C. Martineau, T.C., Mrs. James Stewart, T.C., and many others. As one of the privileged members of the Conference, I feel sure that we all learnt much from one another and from the principal speakers.

B. K.

ISABEL MACDONALD,  
Secretary to the Corporation.

10, Orchard Street, London, W.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)