

original aim was ideal, but in practice these ideals were not always apparent during the late war.

A Geneva message says that Great Britain, France and Belgium are expected to abstain from sending representatives to the next meeting of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the tenth of its existence, which will take place there next month.

England contends that the committee made no protest against the execution of Miss Edith Cavell, while France and Belgium consider the committee showed indifference to offences committed by the Germans during the war on various Red Cross formations.

American representatives will be present, but it is said that they will insist on reading a list of offences charged against the Germans, and against which the committee, in their opinion, should have protested.

We hope the fiendish bombing of hospitals and consequent murder of sick and dying men and nurses, and the sinking of hospital ships, and consequent drowning of helpless wounded and their courageous attendants, will be specially cited. The neutral nations in many instances have shown a sad lack of righteous indignation with these barbaric crimes, and until they do so we are glad to know that Great Britain, France and Belgium will make their rightful disapproval felt through their Red Cross organisations.

THE REGISTERED NURSES' PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL.

A meeting of the R.N.P.C. will be held on Saturday, February 26th, at 431, Oxford Street, W., at 4 p.m., to consider the following Agenda:—

- (1) Rank for Service Nurses.
- (2) Equivalent Standards for Registration.
- (3) The Report of the Nation's Fund for Nurses and to consider a Resolution.
- (4) Unemployment Insurance for Nurses: To receive a Report from the President.

Members will receive a Notice of the meeting, and it is hoped they will be present, if possible, as the items on the Agenda are of importance to the profession as a whole.

It is probable that the Government will take all the time until Easter usually allotted to private members' Bills.

THE BRITISH HOSPITALS' ASSOCIATION AND NURSES' SALARIES.

The Midlands Regional Committee of the British Hospitals' Association, at a meeting recently held at the General Hospital, Birmingham, had under consideration the revised scale of salaries recommended by the College of Nursing, Ltd., and adopted the following resolution:—

"That the Midlands Regional Committee of the British Hospitals Association, whilst fully desirous of giving the nurses adequate remuneration for their services, consider that the proposed increase in the scale of salaries recommended by the College of Nursing in their circular dated December, 1920, is undesirable in the present financial position of the hospitals."

The British Hospitals' Association is composed of senior officials of the voluntary hospitals, including governors, secretaries, matrons, &c. The Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley is Chairman of Council, both of the British Hospitals' Association, and of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and we have thus the unsatisfactory position of the proposals of one body being turned down by the other.

After all, it is an economic question of great importance to the hospitals, as it is a question of demand and supply.

The serious shortage of educated probationers entering hospitals and infirmaries for training is one of the most important questions in relation to future standards of national health, which the community has to face, and if it is not possible for these institutions to procure a sufficient supply of the right type of woman for training at the present rates of payment the personnel of the Hospitals Association will find itself in an exceedingly untenable position at no distant date.

In the near future, to meet the minimum educational standards laid down by the General Nursing Council only those hospitals which provide adequate teaching can hope to attract pupil probationers. We are, therefore, of opinion that to pay high salaries to pupils may defeat the object aimed at, by attracting uneducated and unsuitable persons as probationers, and that moderate salaries should be paid to probationers in training, or even, following the example of the Nightingale Training School for Nurses, fees might be charged in return for efficient professional training and teaching.

In addition, these pupils should have security that once trained and registered, their skilled work will command an adequate return, of an initial salary of not less than £60 per annum for staff nurses, and £100 per annum for sisters of wards. Government Departments might well adopt these scales in branches of nursing outside institutions, and registered nurses should command emoluments from which they can save sufficient to provide for independence in old age.

It is an anomalous position that Matrons of hospitals and infirmaries are apparently recommending through their Council a scale of salaries which are not approved by the Council representing the authorities under whom they serve.

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