

NURSING ECHOES.

How many nurses realise that as a by-product—if we may so term it—of the war there has grown up in our midst the Ministry of Pensions Nursing Service, with Headquarters at 5, Millbank, S.W., of which Miss M. E. Davies, R.R.C. (formerly Matron of St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and of King George's Hospital, Stamford Street, S.E.), is Matron-in-Chief, or that the nursing staff under her direction includes considerably over 1,000 nurses of various grades, a staff numerically larger than the present strength of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

In addition to the Matron-in-Chief there is a Principal Matron at Headquarters, and the grades in the Service are those of Matron, Charge Sister, and Nursing Sister. The members of the Service staff the Ministry of Pensions Hospitals to be found throughout the United Kingdom, two of the largest being the one at Orpington, in Kent, and that at Knotty Ash, Liverpool.

The qualifications for appointment are a certificate of not less than three years' training in a recognised training school for nurses. The applicant must be of British parentage, and will be required to fill in a form of application, and to produce the following documents if required: (a) a certificate of registration of birth, or a declaration made before a magistrate by one of her parents, or former guardians, giving (a) the date of her birth. (b) Certificate of training in the original. (c) Medical Certificate. (d) Dental Certificate.

Matrons and all Sisters are required to sign an undertaking to serve for at least six months. The engagement can be terminated at any time, a month's notice being given and required. Uniform allowance is issued on renewal of the agreement every six months, but in the event of the full period of service not being completed the whole amount must be refunded.

Sisters are appointed provisionally for one month, which is included in the first six months of service. A report in writing on each Sister is made to the Matron-in-Chief before the provisional period expires as regards her suitability for the work. Charge Sisters are, when possible, selected from the Nursing Sisters.

The pay and allowances are Nursing Sister (Staff Nurse), £40, rising by £2 10s. annual increment to £45; Charge Sister, £50, rising £5 to £65; Matron, £75, rising by £10 to £150. Board and washing allowance per annum is the same for all ranks, £55 18s. per annum. Uniform allowance is £20 the first

year, £5 the second year, and £10 each subsequent year. In addition substantial charge pay is given to Matrons and Sisters in charge of the nursing arrangements in hospitals of over 100 beds. The leave allowed is—Matron, six weeks per annum; Charge Sister, five weeks per annum; Nursing Sister, four weeks per annum. Gratuities, in lieu of pension rights, are granted—Matrons, £15 per annum; Sisters, £10; Staff Nurses, £7 10s.

In regard to the work of the nurses of the Northampton District Nurses' Association, the Inspector from the Headquarters of the Q.V.J.I. has reported that "The Central Home is comfortable and well managed, and the Maternity Home, under Miss Almond's superintendence, is efficiently and well conducted. The midwifery training is thorough and systematic, and the general nursing seen was satisfactorily carried out. The district bags were in good order; the books were neatly and well kept."

Five candidates sat for the examinations prior to enrolment as Queen's Nurses; all passed in the first class division, and in two examinations nurses came out second in the United Kingdom, taking 57½ and 57 marks respectively out of a possible 60. Thirty-six nurses gained the Central Midwives Boards' certificates.

A breezy article in the *Brighton Herald*—"Summer Tales of the Surgery Sister"—ought to attract funds to the coffers of the Royal Sussex County Hospital. "It has some unique cases connected with summer by the sea. You ask the Surgery Sister, that cheerful little woman with a stimulating manner which suggests an incarnation of Brighton's best ozone, and with a smile that is sunshine itself. Under the guidance of the medical and surgical staff, she takes the cases as they come, one after the other, in a constant procession all through the day. It is a kind of first-aid arrangement, preliminary to the more expert treatment which she calls in whenever necessary. Her experiences are many, even as the ills that flesh is heir to are many. But just now she talks about things that smack of summer. Her hands are full with cases of sunburn, varying from the slight but tormenting blister to serious sunstroke. She tells you of children with their feet cut by the glass thrown about by holiday makers. There are the boys who go fishing and, aiming wildly, catch themselves in their fish hooks. It is no joke to get a barbed fish hook into your thumb or the back of your neck."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)