

colleagues in Canada and the States the splendid progress being made, and the professional unity already accomplished through this statutory body.

Recently the India Office notified that the Government of India had asked for 21 nurses to be engaged, in the grade of Staff Nurse, in Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service for India, on contract for six months, extendible to one year at the option of the Government of India.

Applicants were informed that the requisite qualifications were that they should "be fully trained nurses between 27 and 35 years of age. Midwifery qualifications (*i.e.*, certificate of the Central Midwives' Board) are required, and the contract will include liability to serve in family hospitals." Lastly, "If you are found to be eligible for appointment, you may be called upon to appear very shortly before a Selection Board at this Office, with a view to your proceeding to India, if selected."

A correspondent informs us that about twenty nurses, mostly Sisters, including nurses from Scotland and Ireland, were brought to the India Office for an interview, all under the impression that they were wanted for service in military hospitals, with the possibility of occasional work amongst the soldiers' families. They found that they were ineligible if they had not practised as midwives, and without one year's practical work in midwifery, over and above the C.M.B. training, no one was accepted. Only three out of the whole number had been practising midwives, and they were accepted.

The applicants were told that they might in all probability be compelled to work alone, with no medical aid, and only a native woman for helper, and gathered that it was really midwives, not nurses, who were required.

From a personal point of view one applicant at least had no complaint to make. She had a very nice trip to London, and was enabled to see relatives whom otherwise she could not have visited just then. But our correspondent draws attention to the useless expenditure of time and money involved in bringing so many applicants from various parts of the kingdom to London, whose fares, expenses and hotel bills were paid, when a letter might have elicited that they had not had the year's practical midwifery experience, which was apparently a *sine qua non*, in addition to possessing the certificate of the Central Midwives Board. Who is responsible for such useless

expenditure of public funds at a time, moreover, when the taxpayer is bearing such crushing burdens? Perhaps the Secretary of State for India will look into the matter.

A Panel of Nurses willing to undertake Emergency District Nursing was established by the Central Council for District Nursing in London in 1919.

Since that date about thirty-five nurses joined the Panel. Of these only a few are still available, some having left London, others having taken permanent posts or withdrawn.

A considerable number of the District Nursing Associations have made use of the nurses and have greatly appreciated their help. More nurses are now needed to fill the gaps. It is an opportunity for those who do not want to take permanent posts to tender a very useful service, and to keep in touch with nursing developments. Application should be made to the Assistant Secretary of the above Council, 3, Temple Gardens, E.C.4.

The Vienna correspondent of the *Lancet* states that as a consequence of the social upheaval, occupations requiring a more than ordinary amount of devotion are not much sought after by the lower classes of the population. If it is hardly possible at present for a middle-class household to find a servant, this fact, not in itself important from the standpoint of the State, assumes a different aspect when it is considered that numerous women unused to household work now have to do it, and thereby suffer severely in health. Moreover, the children cannot be looked after so thoroughly if the middle-class mother has to leave them to do shopping, &c. The general health is thus materially affected. Still more important is the fact that the very onerous vocation of nursing is now becoming discredited. In the General Hospital alone, where good pay and good board are available, more than 70 sisters are wanted. In this country before the war nurses were mostly recruited from the same class as servant girls, barmaids, and factory hands. Better educated girls only took up this calling during the war. The latter now find it easier to work in shops or offices, whilst hospital nurses are eager to go out to the country hospitals, where they are much better off, with less work. Owing to the eight-hour day, instituted by law even in hospitals, the numbers required are trebled, and the scarcity results both from the removal of qualified women from the city and the absence of new-comers, necessitating the closing of several wards in the General Hospital.

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