

We are interested to learn that 118 of the members of the Nursing Staff at St. Bartholomew's Hospital are entitled to vote in this election, a substantial *clientèle* which neither candidate can afford to ignore. Some two years ago Mr. Thomas Hayes, the Clerk to the Governors, represented to the Secretary at the Guildhall that nurses occupying single rooms in the Home were, in fact, lodgers paying rent, as house room was part of their emoluments, and this claim was allowed in the case of nurses of the requisite age.

The position of hospital nurses in relation to the Parliamentary Franchise is most unsatisfactory, as it depends upon the decision of the recording barrister.

It is time that their rights in this particular were legally defined.

The Bishop of Shrewsbury, speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Birkenhead District Nursing Society, said he believed the two chief obstacles to the nurse's work were dirt, and the woeful ignorance of the most elementary principles of attending to the sick. The nurses, working under enormous difficulties, minimised as far as possible the amount of suffering endured by sick people.

The Rev. S. M. Wickham said that one of the best testimonials the nurses could receive was that given by a woman who had rather a dirty home in a poor neighbourhood. When one of the clergy suggested that she should call in a district nurse to attend her daughter who was seriously ill, her reply was: "These nurses are so very particular."

Viscountess Novar, a Vice-President of the Scottish Branch of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, presided over the quarterly meeting of the Council at 29, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, on January 21st.

The quarterly report showed that there were 34 Queen's candidates in training for district work and 22 undergoing midwifery training. Twenty candidates had completed their district training during the period. Affiliations had been granted to four Nursing Associations, and fourteen nurses had received their first appointments. Miss Watt, at present Superintendent of the Fife County Nursing Association, was appointed an organiser for the purpose of forming additional County Nursing Associations in Scotland, and of assisting in the formation of Nursing Associations where none exist. We hope Queen's Nurses only will be employed by these Associations. The days of providing the semi-trained nurse for the poor is surely out of date.

The good work done by Queen's Nurses working under the Lady Dudley's Scheme in the counties of Mayo, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, and Roscommon is well known. Just now the funds are low, and it is even feared that some of the nurses may have to be withdrawn. This would be a calamity, and the Countess of Mayo and Lord Frederick FitzGerald are making a public appeal for help in the *Times*.

The nurses write asking for help for their people, destitute of everything. Thus a nurse called to a confinement case writes of the baby: "I had to wrap it

in a piece of sacking. . . . There is absolutely nothing in the bed but sacks and old coats. They are strangers and very destitute."

Another nurse relates: "This year, owing to the very wet, cold weather, many of the potato crops are quite spoiled, and I am afraid we shall have a still worse time of want, during this winter and spring, than we have already had during the past few years. It is so painful to be so continually in contact with the very evident distress."

It is indeed, and it should be an obligation of honour to strengthen the hands of the nurses who are working so bravely.

With great pleasure we have received a long and interesting letter from Mlle. Dr. Anna Hamilton, Directrice of the Ecole Florence Nightingale at Bordeaux. Her long devotion to the organisation of this wonderful school—the most efficient in France—resulted in a serious breakdown of health last year. Now, she writes, she is better, and is again on duty. This is the more necessary, as Mlle. Mignot, her right hand, has crossed the Atlantic to learn all she can of the progressive organisation of Nursing administration in the United States, hoping to make herself even more efficient than she is. Mlle. Aeschmann, an International Scholar at Bedford College, whose charming acquaintance we made during the time she was in London, is at present helping Dr. Hamilton, and is, we feel sure, a most valuable assistant.

The trained and certificated pupils are eagerly snapped up from the Bordeaux School for important posts all over France, and this is the result of its high reputation, as pupils come to the Ecole from all over France. We call this school the Acorn, as it is already apparent that it will in time spread its beautiful green branches as a lovely oak tree of sound knowledge throughout France.

It is a great pity, therefore, that in France the Bordeaux system of training is not adopted in Paris and elsewhere. The Government now have a "Nursing Council"—on which, we believe, there is no thoroughly trained nurse—and we fear the system adopted by the Minister of Health, who has arranged for two classes of certificates for nurses, will be far from satisfactory in practice. One will be awarded for hospital training, to which all special branches of nursing should be additional; and one for nurses who propose to do Social Work. That includes, we presume, all Public Health Nursing, including district nursing. This is really to be regretted; but so long as the laity claim to, and are encouraged to, organise professional nursing, these mistakes are inevitable. Some day, no doubt, when in every civilised country there is an efficient Nursing Department connected with every Ministry of Health, the public may hope for skilled service. We need it just as much as they do in France. At present the departmental control of Registered Nurses and Midwives in England is in the hands of a young Assistant Secretary at the Ministry of Health, who, with the best intentions in the world, is naturally ignorant of the basic principles of professional Nursing and Midwifery, or of how to guide their expert evolution. Let us hope the Labour Ministry will be able in the near future "changer tout cela!" It is really absurd.

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