

NURSING ECHOES.

It is with heartfelt joy that the Nation has learnt of the progress towards convalescence made by the King since his removal to Craigweil House, Aldwick, near Bognor. Although the weather has been unfavourable His Majesty has been able to enjoy the sunshine, and a certain amount of sea air at his open window, and they are potent aids to the skill of doctors and nurses. On more than one public occasion the Queen's statement that "the King is getting on nicely," has been the best of tonics to her anxious audiences.

At a recent meeting of the Queen's Institute of District Nursing, held at 58, Victoria Street, S.W., when Sir Warren Crooke-Lawless presided, it was announced that the Queen, who is the Patron of the Institute, had appointed H.R.H. the Duchess of York as a member of the Council.

The Queen has also appointed the Duchess of York as President of the Scottish Branch of the Institute in succession to the Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll.

The Duke of Portland has been appointed President.

The fourteenth Annual Report of the Central Council for District Nursing in London, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Council held at the Offices of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, Embankment, E.C., on February 25th, under the presidency of the Chairman, Sir William Collins, M.D., F.R.C.S., K.C.V.O., drew attention to the Question of Nursing and Insurance in the following terms:—

The Committee have spent a considerable amount of time and thought on the subject of District Nursing in connection with industrial Insurance Companies. The inclusion of nursing service for policy-holders of The Mutual Property Insurance Company, together with the extension to London of The Metropolitan Insurance Company of New York, have made the matter one of immediate concern to all District Nursing bodies.

We understand that the Mutual Property Insurance Company is in some districts employing its own nurses, while in many others it contracts with the District Nursing Associations to attend its policy-holders on agreed terms. It is reported that the paid canvassers of the Company compete with the voluntary canvassers of some of the District Nursing Associations, and that an extension of the provision of nursing by Insurance Companies is probable. The provision of District Nursing by profit-earning companies is said to be common in the United States, and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York is extending its operations to this country.

Regret is felt at a development of District Nursing which brings it into association with commercial bodies seeking to make a profit. Such association conflicts with the voluntary principle on which the work has hitherto been conducted, and apart from this feeling the association might possibly lead to a reduction in subscriptions. No objection can be taken to Insurance Companies providing nursing services for their policy-holders, but there is a difference of opinion as to whether or not it is desirable that this provision should be made by employing the nurses of the existing District Nursing Associations. This Council could only indicate disapproval of District Nursing Associations contracting with Insurance Companies by withholding grants from an Association in contract with such Companies, which would probably be regarded as

impracticable or unjustifiable. If Nursing Associations do not contract with these Insurance Companies the latter will presumably employ their own nurses and may compete with the services provided by District Nursing Associations, whose work may thereby be rendered more difficult. In fact, a large extension of the employment of nurses by Insurance Companies might conceivably threaten the existence of District Nursing Associations as hitherto organised.

In these days of health insurance it is very difficult to maintain a monopoly. An important question is which standard of nursing is provided by these insurance societies. If it is that of Queen's Nurses, i.e., State Registered Nurses, not of village nurses, who are not required to have the State qualification, we are unable to see that patients will not avail themselves of nurses supplied by Insurance Companies if they consider it to their advantage to do so.

Although it was so cold and rainy on the afternoon of the Annual Meeting of the Queen's Nurses' League, not only, writes an invited guest in the *Queen's Nurses' Magazine*, was every chair occupied in the large hall in Kingsway, but some of the members had to stand. Miss Beardshaw (Hon. Secretary, East Sussex Branch), presided, and introduced Miss Dorsey, Head of the International Students' Hostel, whose paper on the value of the nurse in preventive work was listened to with great interest. Miss Glass, who has done so much for the League, and who spoke later, said that now it was the nurses themselves who must undertake it, and make it a success, and indeed, when the guests left, it was a very determined-looking company who stayed for the Council Meeting! The interval, when the reunion took place, with tea, showed, however, more eloquently than anything else could have done, what the spirit of the League is, for no one coming in could have failed to feel a very warm and friendly welcome.

The influenza epidemic has not spared the nursing staffs of hospitals and institutions; many of their members are incapacitated, and those who have not succumbed are working to the limit of their capacity. In a number of hospitals whole wards have had to be allotted to sick nurses, both in the Metropolis and the provinces.

At the General Hospital, Birmingham, admission to the hospital is confined to accidents, and emergency cases, and visiting of patients by relations has been stopped till further notice.

The Carnival dance on behalf of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, promoted by the Professional Union of Trained Nurses, and organised by the President, Miss Cattell, and Mrs. Northwood, whose genius for organisation they have proved before, was a great success, indeed it is becoming a hardy annual for some deserving cause. The fancy dresses were very distinctive, and the task of judging a source of perplexity. The P.U.T.N. desire to thank all their kind helpers, and, in spite of the influenza and the snowstorm that tried in vain to cool the ardour of their friends, they hope to hand over to the Hospital a nice little sum. Money is still coming in.

In the absence of Miss Imogen Murphy, the Secretary of the Elizabeth Garratt Anderson Hospital, the prizes

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