

### NURSING ECHOES.

The Annual Report of the Overseas Nursing Association just issued, of which H.R.H. The Princess Beatrice is Patroness, and the Earl of Athlone, K.G., President, always a most interesting publication, this year recapitulates its origin, foundation, work and aim from the year 1896 to 1934.

It is well to remember that the Association dates its existence from the year 1896, when it was constituted under the name of the Colonial Nursing Association, with the object of assisting British Communities in our tropical Colonies and other places abroad to provide themselves with trained nurses.

The enterprise originated in the little Island of Mauritius, a beautiful but remote spot in the Indian Ocean, where, amongst a mixed population of French, Indians, and Chinese, lived a small British Community. Hardly a woman among them had any knowledge of nursing, and there were no professional nurses available in time of illness. These conditions were not peculiar to the Island, for they applied then to almost every one of our Crown Colonies. Doctors there were, and sometimes hospitals; but the efforts of the doctors were handicapped by the lack of any kind of skilled nursing, and the amount of suffering and actual loss of life among both officials and settlers was almost incredible. Mauritius, however, was fortunate in the presence on its shores of some English ladies who determined that this state of things should be remedied.

Mrs. Francis Piggott (now Lady Piggott) was the moving spirit in the undertaking, and has continued ever since to give the most energetic and whole-hearted support to the Overseas Nursing Association of which she thus became the founder.

Ever since 1896 the Association has been the recognised channel through which the Colonial Office draws its supply of nurses for Government posts in the Crown Colonies. This arrangement was effected through the interest and cordial assistance of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain (Mr. Chamberlain being then Secretary of State for the Colonies), and needless to say it has added very largely to the scope and influence of the work.

The appointments filled by Nurses selected by the Overseas Nursing Association now number 660, of these 132 are working under Local Associations, and 528 in the service of Colonial Governments. Two of the Nurses had the honour of nursing the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Philip Cunliffe Lister, G.B.E., M.C.) when he was seriously ill in Kenya, and from many parts of the Dominions appreciative reports are received of the work of the Nurses. Thus one Local Association writes: "A most excellent nurse who will always sacrifice herself to her work. She has worked in very rough surroundings and nothing has mattered to her except her patient."

From the Nurses' point of view there is evidently plenty of opportunity for those with a pioneering spirit. Thus, a nurse who had served in Newfoundland wrote:—

"I was really sorry to have to say good-bye; one would like to do everything that is possible to help

the Outport people, they are so clean and hardworking and live under such difficulties and so very appreciative and grateful of help. I shall always have very pleasant memories, and have every admiration for the courage and resourcefulness of these people. I think that even as a nurse is of great benefit to the people, so also they, by their sheer grit and courage with which they face their tremendous difficulties can be, and are, an inspiration to an English nurse. I shall always feel privileged that I was accepted by the Overseas Nursing Association and sent out as a N.O.N.I.A. (Newfoundland Outport Nursing and Industrial Association) nurse."

And lest nurses should think that there is limited scope for the exercise of their professional skill here is the report of a nurse from Nyasaland:—"The work is very interesting, one gets such a variety of unusual cases. We have just had a very busy spell, in which we had emergency operations for various causes. One man had been gored in the chest by a bull, it just missed his heart, he survived the operation and even healed well but died a fortnight later from septic pneumonia. The morning after this man was admitted, we received two women who had been badly mauled by a leopard. The animal had forced its way into their grass hut whilst they were sleeping; a small baby about a month old with them was not touched. Both women were immediately operated upon and did very well. Yesterday a woman was admitted, having been badly bitten by a crocodile . . . her mother had very bravely dragged her away from the animal."

The Committee of the 1930 Fund for the benefit of Trained District Nurses (1A, Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, W.1), in their Report for the year ending June 30th, state that they have been able also to help financially a number of new applicants. Out of 159 grants given during the year to meet some particular need, 31 were made to such new cases. Moreover, thanks to the magnificent gift of a further £1,000 from the generous anonymous donor of the Fund, they have been able to increase the number of those in receipt of regular weekly grants to 191, *i.e.*, to make such grants to 27 new beneficiaries during the year. Figures may convey little, but the gratitude of the recipients indicates something of the relief from anxiety for the present and for the future that such a statement covers. "You say you are glad to know I find the grant such a help," writes one, "it is salvation, and brought me back life and faith and self-respect."

Such assurances make the Committee more than ever conscious of their responsibility and privilege in acting as administrators of a Fund so generously conceived and given and so generously supplemented as the 1930 Fund has been.

There has been a distinct decrease in the number of new applications during the year, but of the 105 received only 21 have been technically ineligible for benefit, which seems to indicate that the scope of the Fund is now more generally understood. In such ineligible cases the Committee always try to put the applicant in touch with the appropriate fund which may help her.

The seventy-first Annual Report of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary Training School and Home for Nurses,

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