

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

THE NURSING RECORD

EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, REGISTERED NURSE.

No. 2,003. Vol. 83.

JUNE, 1935.

Price Sevenpence.

EDITORIAL.

ARE NURSES NOISE-CONSCIOUS ?

That most admirable and energetic society, the Anti-Noise League, of which the Rt. Hon. the Lord Horder, K.C.V.O., is President, has organised a Noise Abatement Exhibition which was opened by the Prime Minister on May 31st at the Science Museum, South Kensington, and by the kind permission of the Director will remain open throughout the present month. It is the first exhibition of the kind, and the Handbook issued in connection with it is the first complete survey of the noise problem to be published in this country.

In connection with the Exhibition, a Conference is to be held from June 26th to June 28th inclusive, and it is evident that the interest of members of the Government has been secured for both for, in addition to the opening of the Exhibition by the Prime Minister, the following Chairmen are announced to preside at the various Sessions of the Conference. *June 26th*—"Sound and Noise," Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha, M.P. (Minister of Transport). *June 27th*—"The Law and Noise," Mr. Geoffrey Shakespeare, M.P. (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health). "Housing and Noise," the Rt. Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P. (First Commissioner of Works). *June 28th*—"Education and the Noise Problem," the Rt. Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (President of the Board of Education). Indeed, the only chairman who is not either a member of the Government or an official in a Government Department is Mr. H. G. Wells, who presides on the afternoon of June 28th over the Session on "Health and Noise." It is an auspicious programme for the first big public appearance of so new a society.

In a foreword to the Exhibition Handbook (which may be secured by non-members of the League, price 6d., on application to the General Secretary, 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1), Lord Horder proclaims:—

"At last we are noise-conscious.

"The principle that noise is a nuisance and a disturber of human happiness has been generally accepted. The result of this is that needless noise (and there is a great deal more preventable noise than we imagine) is being suppressed wherever possible.

"It has been the business of the Anti-Noise League to activate those concerned in the design and manufacture of noisy machines towards better manners as well as more efficient science. . . . Manufacturers are almost one hundred per cent. amenable to good sense and to the good of the community.

"We have mobilised (as seen in this Exhibition) all

the specialists, the manufacturers, designers, engineers and transport managers; and it remains for the public, who are directly likely to benefit from this work, and who most certainly will suffer if it be allowed to sag at this critical moment, to carry on.

"The object of this Exhibition is to make you belligerent, to make you say, 'I don't see why I should stand it—if it is so easily doused!' whatever your pet abomination in noise may be. The object of this Exhibition is to show you what can be done: the result of it is that you know what to ask for. Go on demanding until you get it. There has rarely been an occasion when the intelligent public failed to get what it really wanted.

"We have done what we can: we have marshalled experts and we have got the manufacturers on your side, but we cannot *make* you enjoy greater quiet, smooth nerves, decent sleep, and better general health. You can have these things, and have them abundantly, if you will carry on with the next step—in your own and your children's interest.

"If you want further details as to the best way to set about getting the cure applied, ask the League; that is part of the personal service you get in return for your subscription."

In a paper on "The Elimination of Needless Noise" in the Exhibition Handbook, Lord Horder further states:—

"Doctors are definitely convinced that noise wears down the human nervous system, so that both the natural resistance to disease and the natural power of recovery from disease are lowered. In this way noise puts health in jeopardy, and most intelligent folk can understand this from the effect of it upon themselves."

We were recently asked, "Are nurses noise-conscious?" and we found it impossible to answer the question with a direct affirmative or a direct negative, in regard to the nursing profession as a whole. Certainly it is most important that nurses, of all classes of the community, should cultivate noise-consciousness, the habit of quiet movement, and of gently handling persons and things.

Is the importance of noise-consciousness impressed on nurses in training? We doubt whether either in precept or practice much time is allotted to this subject.

We hope that Sister-Tutors and Ward Sisters will consider their opportunities and responsibilities in regard to the cultivation of noise-consciousness in student nurses.

A visit to the Noise Abatement Exhibition will we hope be made by thousands of Nurses. Those who have experience of hospitals will appreciate the lesson to be learned from the exhibit of a noise-controlled ward.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)