

THE CLASH OF ARMS.

The long-anticipated Clash of Arms between Italy and Abyssinia, suddenly resounded on October 3rd, to be followed, no doubt, with heartbreak and misery. The League of Nations is in session with the best intentions in the world for advocating peace. We Nurses, as citizens, will watch the progress of affairs in this serious conflict, earnestly hoping for a speedy termination of bloodshed, but firmly of opinion that under no circumstances should England be dragged into active war to uphold the vague theories of the Covenant of the League. We have not yet forgotten the horrors of 1914-1918 and have still with us thousands of human beings suffering untold misery from the barbarous methods of modern warfare.

We are glad to know that skilled nurses are offering to care for the wounded of both nations.

We hear of nurses leaving England for this purpose.

Dr. Hans Aaberg, and six nurses, equipped by the Red Cross, have left Stockholm for Abyssinia to join three Swedish doctors already there.

HOSPITALS IN ABYSSINIA.

Because Abyssinia interests all the world at the moment Messrs. Putnams have published Ladislas Farago's book "Abyssinia on the Eve" (10s. 6d.), and it is a book filled with up-to-date facts, for the author spent the first half of 1935 in the country.

His account of the hospitals is typical of the country with its mixture of old and new, efficiency and crudity.

In the capital Addis Ababa is the Imperial Hospital, the biggest in the country, planned to hold 800, but like so many other things in Abyssinia, unfinished for lack of money. The hospital chief, a Swede, Dr. Kurt Hanner, told Farago that everything was paid for by the Emperor out of his own pocket, and there were modern sunlight and other radiological plant, independent light and water supply, and an operating theatre.

"It is sad," said Dr. Kurt, "that the Emperor's money must be used for other purposes now. This hospital has been the dream of my life, and I was just about to see it materialise. The Emperor was going to supply the necessary funds for further developments when this dispute with Italy interrupted, and now the money that was going to be used for medical and surgical apparatus is being spent on bullets."

Strangely enough while Farago was in the hospital he saw a nurse in light blue uniform and a white cap bandage a wound for a native, and it turned out he had no money to pay, but paid with four bullets!

In the out-patients department was a crowd of about a hundred children who had travelled fourteen days to be inoculated against small pox. They were inoculated and went home, to be followed the next day by hundreds more.

The black nurses washed themselves scrupulously for an operation to be performed on an Abyssinian with appendicitis. The doors were closed, the mask applied, the native counted in Amharic and dropped off into unconsciousness. Everything proceeded as in a European hospital.

The Italians in their attempts to Italianise the country built a fine hospital at Gullali, the most beautiful building in the land. It was built of marble and other expensive stone brought from Italy. It was opened recently with great solemnity and called the "Haile Selassie Hospital," Haile Selassie being the Emperor's name. An Abyssinian minister told Farago "That is only an advertisement, and they cannot impress us like that. The whole hospital is only a facade, and there is nothing behind it."

Unfortunately the natives still prefer to patronise quacks and to practise superstitious cures, but a start has, at any rate, been made.

WOMEN AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Women have very little representation and in consequence little power in the League of Nations, and to judge from the result of their recent claims made to the League Assembly, their interests receive scant consideration. Why? We are taxed equally with men to meet the huge expenditure of the League.

International Council of Women and Peace.

Ishbel, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair recently introduced a deputation from the International Council of Women to the President of the Assembly of the League of Nations, when messages of support for the League's efforts to preserve peace were delivered from the affiliated National Councils of Women throughout the world.

Nationality of Married Women—Choice Withheld.

In 1931 the British Government, through its delegates at Geneva, declared that it considered it right that all disabilities of married women in matters of nationality should be removed. At a recent meeting of the Legal Committee of the League Assembly the consensus of opinion was that the time is not yet opportune for the introduction of collective international legislation permitting married women to choose their own nationality.

Sir William Malkin, United Kingdom, thought that the Council should be left to decide when the time was ripe for further international discussion.

Why the League of Nations? Surely it is the duty of the British Parliament to do justice to British women at home and in the Dominions. This vital question must be kept well to the fore in the coming election. We advise nurses with votes to get a straight reply from Parliamentary candidates as to whether they will support our claim to choose our own nationality or not.

When it comes to submitting the nationality of enfranchised white women to the vote of alien coloured men whose women are still in a condition of bondage, negotiable "chattels" in law, we are strongly of opinion that no such indignity should be quietly submitted to by the women in Great Britain. We know that a Petition signed by 100 women's associations in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Bermuda and Ceylon, was presented by Mrs. Tate, M.P., to our House of Commons on July 23rd claiming that disabilities in matters of nationality should be removed.

Equality Claim—250 Women call on Dr. Benes.

The *Daily Telegraph* reports:—Two hundred and fifty women, representing the most important women's organisations of the world, recently called on M. Benes, President of the League Assembly, to lay before him women's claims to equality all over the world. Speakers were introduced by Mrs. Corbett Ashby, formerly a member of the United Kingdom delegation to the Disarmament Conference.

The principal speaker was Miss Julia Varley representing the women's committee of the Trades Union Congress and the international committee of trade union women.

She said that the organisations for which she spoke opposed the view that the League should adopt a "blanket convention" giving women exactly the same status as men. This, she said, would have the effect of ruining Labour legislation which had been adopted in some countries providing for reduced working hours for women and banning the employment of women in dangerous or unhealthy trades and providing widows' pensions, etc.

This question was also discussed by the Legal Committee of the League Assembly, which adjourned without reaching a decision on the question.

It is only two years ago that the International Council of Nurses had to take urgent action to prevent the

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