

### NURSING ECHOES.

The Coronation of King Edward VIII is announced to take place in May, 1937. The Abbey is necessarily commandeered for many weeks before and after the magnificent ceremony, to prepare and dismantle.

Nurses from Westminster Hospital were privileged to attend at the Coronation of King George V on June 22nd, 1911, with first aid appliances. Awaiting the opening of the doors of the Abbey at 5 a.m., we well remember seeing them in their neat uniforms trip across the road, baskets in hand, and enter by the North Door. No doubt the same recognition of the valuable services of professional nurses will be accorded at the forthcoming Coronation. For those selected it will be the privilege of a lifetime.

The Princess Royal, and her son, the Hon. Gerald Lascelles, have been suffering with measles, at Harewood House. Her Royal Highness, who is not too strong, will need careful nursing during convalescence, as the attack has been severe. It is well that at last doctors and nurses realise the necessity to guard against complications. Eyes, ears, lungs, all may be attacked with very disastrous results. The Princess Royal, who from childhood was dearly beloved by the late King, whose only daughter she was, is feeling the loss of her father with sincere grief.

The Italian Crown Princess of Italy, the Princess of Piedmont, had an enthusiastic welcome upon landing at Asmara, Eritrea; she visited the Asmara hospitals, and has joined the Eritrean Red Cross Services as a Nursing Sister. We hear the Italian hospital arrangements have been wonderfully organised; wherever there are wounded men one rejoices that they are being cared for with devotion.

Never in our time shall we again read such a heart-rending appeal from a Royal lady as that of Princess Tsahai, daughter of the Emperor of Abyssinia, to the press of the so-called civilised world and which was inserted in *The Times*. "For God's sake help us," she cried. To the men of civilised nations, to their Powers and potentates, this lion-hearted girl of 17 appealed—alas! apparently help there is none—just a few charitable people, brave medical men, and Red Cross stores and appliances have been sent to stem the tide of suffering. Politically our rulers remain impotent.

As the defences of our country have been permitted to almost die a natural death during the past few years—no patriotic nurse will disagree with their reorganization on a basis of safety provided for in the Budget, although some of us realise the risk was inexcusable. Of course additional taxation will be necessary, but although nurses will consider the additional 2d. on tea the last straw, we fear the increased expense will not deter them from over indulgence in the tea habit, to which many nurses are prone.

Why did the Chancellor not think of substituting a tax on cosmetics? Sir A. Wilson, member for Hitchin, expressed the opinion in the House that: "If cosmetics and aids to beauty, which spoiled so many pretty faces, were added to the list, he could place no limit to the sums which the Chancellor could raise."

All efficient administrators of nursing set great store on sound domestic management on which to build high standards of nursing—so much of the comfort of the patient depends upon it. Writing on "Domestic Service and District Cooks" in *The Times*, Miss Florence White of Fareham, Hants, says:—

"Your readers may be interested to know that now our 'Good Food Register' is fairly launched we are starting as soon as possible a central house of studies for the English Folk Cookery Association. This is part of the original scheme; one of its features will be the individual training in cookery, etc., of girls and women for special positions, from kitchenmaids in private houses to district cooks and lecturers, etc. Another is the use of a good reference library for the use of members only. We believe it would be a good thing if a new social service were inaugurated on the lines of the District Nursing Service to visit the houses of anyone, in any position, who desired this service. We are beginning to train girls and women in various spheres for this work."

Here, it would appear, is an excellent scheme which would be of great practical value to girls contemplating a nursing career when age permits; district cooks would be ill equipped unless they were skilled in invalid cookery.

It may, or may not, be true that the average dieting in sick wards leaves much to be desired—what with central kitchens, and necessary transport—carving, weighing and delivery—how is it possible to avoid chill? There is only one way, and that is the use of ward kitchens. How obsolete and impossible exclaims the modern administrator! But is it? When will a woman architect design wards with a scientific kitchen annex, where the patients' food can be prepared, and served *hot*. Poor people and middle-class people such as are the majority of hospital patients, eat in, or near by, the kitchen, and the food, whatever it is, is served piping hot and tasty—that is half the battle in digestion.

We have never forgotten the system we found in order at "Barts." in 1881 where the patients' chops, steaks, chickens, fish, potatoes and milk puddings were cooked in the little kitchens off the wards under the supervision of practical old Sisters—done to a turn, and hurried into the ward—clean platters were collected anon.

And then on one sad day, a physician, experimenting in the value of diets, persuaded his colleagues to draw up new diet sheets—of a somewhat varied and tasteless nature. The smell of cooking was unendurable, so he said (the patients loved it), so food for the future was prepared *across the square*, in a central kitchen, and trundled over to the wards in all weathers! Alas! no more juicy steaks and piping hot potatoes! The result was chilled food, and chilled appetites.

No, give us scientifically constructed diet kitchens, electrically equipped, attached to the wards—as other necessary annexes are (and as you will find them in first-class restaurants), and this everlasting complaint of unappetising hospital cooking will cease. Tom, Dick and Harry, when laid low, will utter in chorus: "I ain't got much appetite, Sister, but what food I 'ave I want 'ot.'"

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