

NURSING IN MANITOBA.

BY MISS EUPHEMIA TORRY.

The province of Manitoba, on the principle that prevention is better than cure, organised, in 1916, a public health service. Five trained nurses were assigned to distant parts of the province for work in schools and also to report on general health conditions. The reports showed such general need of health education (people of 25 nationalities live in Manitoba and only just over half the 667,000 inhabitants are Anglo-Saxon) that the nurses' work has ever since been concentrated on teaching, either the school children direct, or through their teachers, or through various groups such as Women's Institutes.

During the prosperous years Manitoba increased considerably the number of public health nurses, but now money is so short there are only nine nurses for all those country districts where medical and social services are not available. Four nurse supervisors are now struggling to carry on special work in the closely settled areas formerly served by eighteen nurses. Out in the country, even when there is a nurse, her district is so large that she can hardly do more than inspect the schools and follow up relief cases and tubercular patients. When an epidemic occurs locally, however, someone is detailed for actual nursing.

In the city of Winnipeg "district nursing" is mostly done by the Victorian Order of Nurses, who are organised somewhat on the lines of the Queen's Jubilee Nurses.

Another service is that of the Margaret Scott Nursing Mission, which works on the principle laid down by its foundress and namesake, that if the cause is good, if, in fact, it is God's cause, He will provide for it. So no appeals for funds may be made, no fetes or entertainments given for its benefit, no one even asked to subscribe. But subscribe they do, for £200 came in in gifts during 1934 and much more in gifts in kind. The greater part of the annual £3,000 spent on the work is provided by grants from the City of Winnipeg.

This Society has been working for 35 years and now employs five fully trained nurses permanently and relays of eight student nurses who, during their last year's training, may spend several months at the Mission gaining public health experience. There is a good deal of competition among students to go to the Mission, for though the work is hard it is varied and interesting. Here is an account of a nurse's day:—

"I walk from the street-car to Poland. . . A mother lies in bed, a scarf about her neck, a brightly coloured toque on her head, and wearing two or three sweaters in addition to her nightie. Instead of sheets or blankets she has a huge

gaily covered feather tick covering her. . . On the floor are a number of children crying and quarrelling. The patient has a severe chest cold. I wash her, apply mustard plasters, cover her up, replace the toque, wash the children's faces, and go off . . . to Italy.

"Young Italy is only two days old. After washing him I fit him out in clothes sent by the Mission to replace his rags, am thanked mostly in gestures by the mother, who does not speak English—and go on to Russia.

"A tiny three-roomed shack, poorly heated, poorly lighted, the home of father, mother and five children. On the walls immense portraits of grandfather and great-grandfather in their sternest mood. Two children have pneumonia, and they also receive woollies from the Mission.

"Scotland next, a clean kitchen, 'parritch' on the stove and two healthy youngsters licking their plates clean. In the bedroom the father with creeping paralysis, and after I have 'fixed him oop,' I find a good cup of tea waiting for me.

"Then England, an unemployed father, a pale listless mother and two tiny Britishers wailing loudly for food, of which there is but a pitiful supply."

To complete her story, nurse gives an Irish picture. Mrs. Murphy lives "alone" except for a dog, a cat, a parrot and a few neighbours who help her along a bit. While being washed she chatters of the "old country" and at parting gives nurse a bit of shamrock from the cherished plant in her window.

CREMATION
Advocated by Lord Horder.

Lord Horder, speaking recently at a conference of the Cremation Society at Leicester, emphasized the advantages of cremation as a great and growing movement which operated for health and economic benefit.

Local authorities, he said, had to dispose of about 500,000 people who died each year in Great Britain. Most of them were buried, and in one case the loss to the rates was £9 per interment.

In overcrowded towns there was a growing problem of the provision of land to meet the cemetery demands of the future. This waste of land could not go on indefinitely, and economic if no other considerations compelled local authorities to adopt cremation as the logical alternative whereby the rates would be relieved and land was released for the health and housing of the people.

In 1925 there were 2,701 persons cremated in Great Britain; in 1935 the number was 9,614. In 1925 there were 16 crematoria operating in this country; to-day there were 31, and 38 others were under consideration.

The system of certification for cremation, by which two qualified medical men must certify the cause of death and see the body, was a safeguard against crime.



MARGARET SCOTT.

IF IN TRYING TO SERVE GOD I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO CHEER AND COMFORT OTHERS, MY HIGHEST AIM HAS BEEN ATTAINED. *Psalm 115, 1.—Margaret Scott.*

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