

### THE PASSING BELL.

Miss Annie McWillie Peterkin, C.B.E., S.R.N.

We regret to record, at Worthing, after a short illness, the death, on November 29th, of Miss Annie McWillie Peterkin, C.B.E., S.R.N., formerly General Superintendent of the Queen's Institute of District Nursing. Miss Peterkin was trained and certificated at Chalmers' Hospital, Banff, and her whole life after her training was spent in connection with the Queen's Institute, of which she eventually became General Superintendent in England and Wales. She resigned this position in 1932, and has since been living at Hove.

The funeral service at St. Leonard's Church, Hove, was attended by representatives of the Council of the Queen's Institute and a large number of Queen's Nurses. Cremation afterwards took place at the Brighton Crematorium.

Mrs. George Carington Smith.

Many of our readers will learn with deep regret of the death of Mrs. George Carington Smith, of Montreal, who was so kind a friend to the Congress members during the meeting of the International Congress of Nurses in 1929. She entertained three of the Congress members for ten days, and was constantly in attendance at the Congress Halls, and at the conclusion of the morning sessions conveyed members in her comfortable car to luncheon at her own house, or carried them off to a country club on the banks of the lovely St. Lawrence, bringing them back again refreshed in mind and body in time for the afternoon sessions.

Mrs. Carington Smith, who was a member of the first class of nurses graduated from the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, and was presented with a gold badge by the late Lord Strathcona, never lost after her marriage her interest in nursing. She was a strong imperialist, and lost no opportunity of furthering the interests of the Empire. When she visited this country in 1931 she met at the Café Monaco, at a dinner arranged in her honour, at which Mrs. Bedford Fenwick presided, some of those with whom she had been most intimate during the Congress in Montreal.

She passed away in her sleep—an end for which she had always hoped. We offer in the name of her friends on this side of the Atlantic our sincere sympathy to her family.

### RED CROSS ACTIVITIES.

#### CHRISTMAS COMFORTS FOR PENSIONER PATIENTS.

The Order of St. John and the British Red Cross Society have arranged, through the Ministry of Pensions, as in previous years, to provide additional comforts for the men actually in Ministry Hospitals on Christmas Day. There are, however, ex-Service Pensioners, who will be patients in other hospitals as a result of their War disabilities, and the Joint Council of the two bodies is endeavouring to get in touch with these hospitals, so that no eligible cases in hospital on Christmas Day may fail to receive the same gifts as those in Pensions Hospitals.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO SPANISH RELIEF WORK.

Sir Edward Stewart, K.B.E., Deputy Chairman of the British Red Cross Society has just returned from Paris, after attending a meeting of the Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, at which the relief work of the International Red Cross Committee in Spain was one of the subjects discussed.

It was recently announced that the British Government had given £5,000 in aid of this work, and the British Red Cross Society's contribution, transmitted to the International Red Cross Committee, in money, medical and surgical supplies and material, has amounted to nearly £1,400.

### THE FALL IN THE BIRTH-RATE.

Mr. A. P. Herbert, M.P., on the second reading of the Population (Statistics) Bill—House of Commons.

In 1937 was a rumour going round  
That income-tax was soon to be six shillings in the pound ;  
The cost of education every season seemed to swell ;  
And to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

They pulled down all the houses where the children used  
to crowd,  
And built expensive blocks of flats where children weren't  
allowed ;  
And if father got a job there wasn't anywhere to dwell,  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.

Five hundred brand new motor-cars each morning rode the  
roads,  
And flashed about like comets or sat motionless as toads ;  
Whichever course they took they made the public highway  
hell,  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.  
(Laughter.)

The laws were very comical : to bet was voted lax,  
But your betting was the only thing that nobody would tax ;  
You couldn't have a wine unless you'd sandwiches as well ;  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.  
(Laughter.)

Great Science nobly laboured to increase the people's joys,  
But every new invention seemed to add another noise ;  
One was always on the telephone or answering the bell,  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.  
(Laughter.)

The taverns were controlled by men who didn't want to  
drink ;  
The newspapers were run by men who hadn't time to  
think ;  
The cinema was managed by a man who couldn't spell,  
(Laughter.)  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.

Abroad, to show that everyone was passionate for peace,  
All children under seven joined the Army or police ;  
The babies studied musketry while mother filled a shell—  
And everybody wondered why the population fell.  
(Laughter.)

The world, in short, which never was extravagantly sane,  
Developed all the signs of inflammation of the brain :  
The past was not encouraging, the future none could tell,  
(Here the hon. member, to the amusement of the House,  
pointed to the Minister of Health.)  
But the Minister still wonders why the population fell.  
(Loud cheers and laughter.)

### THE DEAR ANIMALS.

Mrs. Geoffrey Brooke writes feelingly in support of the humane treatment of old horses when their sphere of usefulness is waning. She begs for a merciful end and that they should be humanely destroyed in their own premises.

To part with them may mean causing these unfortunate humble servants to ever increasing hardships, often changing owners and sinking lower and lower. Who can predict what their tragic fate may eventually be ?

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