

Then came some years of work in Liverpool, together with her sister, where they successfully managed a busy Nursing Home, privileged to work with the celebrated surgeon, Sir Robert Jones.

Miss Haswell has, of course, the real international nursing flair, and has attended a number of the inspiring Congresses of the International Council of Nurses, notably those held in London (1909), Geneva, Paris, Montreal, and London (1937).

So you see why we are all happy to have this lady of world-wide experience as a member of our Council.

THE FRONTIER NURSING SERVICE.

"ALL MY HEART IS WITH YOU."

Wendover, Kentucky. U.S.A.

June 4th, 1940.

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE DEAR OLD COUNTRY,

With this multigraphed letter which I am sending all of you, I shall enclose a few personal lines for each one. I have written none of you since the terrible offensive began in May, but the reason I haven't written is because I could serve you better in the use of my spare time in other ways. Never a day has passed that I haven't telegraphed or written letters or seen people to urge with every power I have that my country throw all of her weight immediately in your defence.

It just happened that during May I had taken speaking engagements in a number of mid-western and north-western cities. That section of my country is considered usually the slowest to respond to world-wide conditions. I don't believe that this is true. I got a huge applause everywhere when I said that the Frontier Nursing Service had never been neutral and when I urged immediate action on the part of everyone present. Among the hundreds of people with whom I talked, I found only three who did not want to repeal the Neutrality Act at once and to send our army bomber planes over as a gift at once and to allow our pilots and other aviation experts to go over at once if they volunteered to do so. I didn't find but three people who did not want to give every financial support our country affords at once and to drop what some have called our indecent neutrality.

I, personally, as some of you know, was a convert before the war to Clarence Streit's "Union Now" of the democracies. With the beginning of the war, I felt very strongly and urged frequently our intervention as the one way in which the war could be closed out before it attained the terrific aspect it has to-day. So that it is with the conviction that only if we free societies of people stand together can any of us continue to exist in the world to-day, that I am doing all I can every day to further our common cause. Aside from that, I do not need to tell any of you how much I love the Old Country and how much my heart is wrung by your grave danger and your deep distress.

You will all have received the spring *Quarterly Bulletin* of the Frontier Nursing Service, and that will give you news of the Service. Please bear in mind when you read it that it went to press before the spring offensive, and that is why there is no mention of the present acute situation in its pages. It will be very different with the summer issue. As you can well imagine, the Frontier Nursing Service, up to this date in early June, is probably more affected in its personnel by the war than any nursing organisation not in the invaded countries. Seven of our old British nurses have gone home, and by the middle of June nine will have gone. We wish them Godspeed and we approve whole-heartedly of the action they are taking. Also our hearts are wrung because we are all one family and we do not know if all of them will be alive to return to us

when the war is over. Always we shall remain a British-American service.

I need not add that our administrative problems are stupendous. We are putting into effect, as rapidly as we can, graduate training for American nurses similar to that which I and other Americans got in the Old Country. We can do it only on a limited scale as yet, and we cannot begin to fill posts as rapidly as they are vacated. In addition to all this, there are key posts on the districts where an old and seasoned nurse is replaced by a new and untried one. That is another reason why I cannot write any of you at length. I need not add that I am taking no holiday this year, but must give all of my time and strength to my responsibilities towards the Frontier Nursing Service and to my responsibilities as a member of a democracy to see that we do not let you down. Lastly, I want to tell you each and all again how profoundly I admire and respect you. The defence of Calais, the return from Dunkirk, and the actions of the British Navy and the Royal Air Force are among the most courageous and superb things recorded in all history. I am grateful that I am of one blood with you. God keep you.

MARY BRECKINRIDGE.

CONSCRIPTION FOR NURSES.

Lord Davies is reported in the press to have stated at Cardiff recently, "We must conscript nurses, the position is nothing short of a tragedy."

"The shortage in Wales," he said, "is causing us the gravest concern. At one hospital equipped with every amenity, 20 beds cannot be occupied owing to the scarcity of trained personnel."

"Beds at other hospitals are vacant for the same reason. They had offered improved salaries and living conditions without success. He intended to urge the Minister of Health to adopt conscription as the only solution of the problem."

This is a serious proposition, and one which, of course, no Minister of Health would venture to put in practice. The Nursing Question is much more serious than it would appear.

One, the type of girl, instinct with a selfless devotion to humanity, a keen sense of public duty, and a love of real values, has been superseded in recent years by a less serious type of woman, who has little instinct for self-sacrifice. If this type is to be subject to a press gang for hospital service, pity the poor patients.

Then there are other reasons why intelligent girls suspect nursing as a life's work. Their cloth carries little respect and power. Sentimental and fussy untrained women who know nothing of nursing grasp positions of authority on their governing bodies, and public men (*vide* the London County Council) have thrust 10,000 British nurses under the control of a naturalised alien in time of war—an indefensible offence to patriotic and professional feeling. Just so long as the public treat Registered Nurses as helots, just so long will the women worth training fail to respond to the call for their services.

Let justice be done or worse may befall.

IS THE GOVERNMENT TO BLAME?

At the last meeting of the L.C.C. Mr. Charles Latham stated that under Government instructions the employment by the Council of German, Austrian, Italian, and Stateless aliens had been terminated.

He failed to announce, however, that the nursing staff had been placed under the control of a British born matron in time of war. When is justice to be done in this particular? Is the Government to blame?

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