

and Miss Katherine Watt, C.B.E., R.R.C., Chief Nursing Officer.

The Chief of the Unit's Nursing Staff is Miss Gertrude Madley, who was born at Lydbrook, Gloucestershire, and served for 3½ years overseas with the British troops in the last war. She became an American citizen in 1933.

Miss Elizabeth Cogswell Phillips, Associate Chief Nurse in charge of public health nursing, who comes from Buffalo, Miss Charlotte Raymond, public health nutritionist, who has specialised in dietetics.

The American personnel of the unit—doctors, technicians and nurses—will number 84, many of whom have arrived, while others will be here soon. Equipment and material have arrived, and not one of the ships bringing material over has been lost. The unit will open soon in the South of England a hospital for infectious diseases with 125 beds. It will take cases of special difficulty or complexity, and will be open free to military and civilian patients. The unit will also provide a well-equipped laboratory, which will be an integral part of the Ministry's emergency public health laboratory system; and it will send out mobile teams of doctors and nurses which will inquire into the origins of outbreaks of disease in any part of the country.

Sir Wilson Jameson explained that when an offer of help was received from Harvard University it was decided that they could best help in the field of medical public health; the American Red Cross helped financially, and this unit was the outcome. The public health nurses in the United States were the backbone of the public health work there, and America had sent some of her best.

When the National Health Nursing Service is organised at the Ministry of Health, as it should have been for ages past, we shall have no difficulty in establishing a first-rate service in Great Britain, encouraged, let us hope, and not obstructed by ignorant politicians as in recent administrations. Women M.P.s have failed deplorably in this connection.

#### "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Canadian tank troops were among the large contingent which recently arrived in this country. In this unit are a number of Americans who volunteered for service with the Canadian Forces. Warmest gratitude to every gallant man; in life or death they have chosen honour, without which manhood is worthless. Let us hope we shall soon hear the glorious "Battle Hymn of the Republic" by our military bands, and let us remember its inspiring words were written by a woman.

#### The Martyrdom of Poland Continues.

*The Times* quotes the *Danziger Vorposten* that a Polish Red Cross nurse, Valeria Marzejewska, aged 28, has been sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment with hard labour for having furnished an English prisoner of war with food and clothes to help him to escape. The announcement goes on to say that the Polish woman avoided the death sentence only because the English prisoner was caught.

The murder of Edith Cavell in the last war, and the horror it aroused throughout the world, has made no impression on the mentality of the Hun. The martyrdom of Poland is fiercely enforced.

#### Cretan Women Warriors.

Among the prisoners taken in Crete by the Germans were 10 Cretan women wearing Greek uniform and fully armed. They were taken to Athens and sent to Germany on the orders of Hitler, who had expressed a desire to see them.

Let us hope they will escape with their lives.

## THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

We deeply regret to record the death, on June 28th last, of Miss Jean I. Gunn, O.B.E., First Vice-President of the International Council of Nurses, Superintendent of Nurses, School of Nursing, Toronto General Hospital, Toronto, Canada, which was reported by cable as we go to press. A great personality in international Nursing circles, and a leader in the Canadian Nursing world. We shall hope for further information on this sad event for report in our next issue.

## THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The following letter addressed to the National Council of Nurses should not, we think, be ignored. The writer shows evidence of love of her work and devotion to duty. She assures us she expresses the views of her colleagues.

At the moment nursing organisation is out of joint and strict justice to both patients and their attendants very difficult to attain.

Perhaps some public-spirited members of the National Council would be willing to give advice.

6, YPRES ROAD,  
COLCHESTER, ESSEX.

June 12th, 1941.

DEAR MADAM,—

This letter will doubtless be very irregular, but I hope so much that it won't fall on stony ground.

I am writing as a V.A.D. who has been nursing since the beginning of war and I am probably voicing the opinion of many others in similar circumstances. We want to know if it could be made possible that either the work we are doing could shorten our training as State Registered Nurses, or if some arrangement could be made by which those serving in big service hospitals could take some of our examinations during the war, either in London or at hospitals in the town in which we are stationed.

After all, we get so much experience in many of the branches of nursing over a long stretch of time. We work in medical and surgical wards, as day nurses and night nurses, and also in the theatre. We get graded on the reports from the sisters of the wards we are in and as Grade I V.A.D.s we are supposed to be capable of being left alone in charge of a ward full of patients. Most of us spend several months in camp reception stations, where we act automatically as sisters because there is no one in higher authority except the M.O. There we have all the responsibility and nursing that a sister gets in a bigger hospital, and we often have to do jobs that only the surgeon would do in a bigger hospital.

Most of us who were V.A.D.s before war broke out, and a lot of those who joined up at the beginning of war, are very keen on our work and we would feel so much keener and happier if we knew we were getting somewhere. If we knew that if we wanted to train properly after the war a year or even two years might be taken off our training—or if we could take some examinations now and so exempt us from those we would have to take later on as pros. and those of the next stage. It seems very unfair that no matter how hard we work, how much we are bullied and chivvied about, how much responsibility and nursing experience we get, and how much we learn and are keen to learn, it is all of no avail—and if the war lasts ten years,

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