

NURSING ECHOES.

American and Canadian nurses have set their colleagues elsewhere the lesson of loyalty. All their devoted pioneers are kept in mind by suitable memorials financed by younger generations of nurses who realise their debt to the women who inspired and organised the honourable professional standards they enjoy; records of their virtues have been filed and compiled and their devotion recorded by fitting memorials. We could name a dozen.

The Mary Agnes Snively Award Committee appreciate the honour of awarding the Mary Agnes Snively medals, which constitutes a memorial to the Founder of the Canadian Nurses' Association, which bear her name.

These medals are awarded at each biennial meeting to nurses who, in the considered opinion of the provincial associations, exemplify, in their professional work, the lofty ideals and standards of service which characterised the life of Miss Snively. That she may continue to live in the hearts and minds of those who carry on the work she loved and served so ably is the cherished hope expressed in the ceremony of the presentation of the medals.

The awards for 1942 will bring to 12 the number of Canadian nurses who are privileged in the possession of the Mary Agnes Snively medal. All are women of distinction who have been unflinching in their loyalties and unstinting in their efforts toward the advancement of nursing education and nursing service.

To the list of previous years we now add the names of Grace M. Fairley, Director, School of Nursing, Vancouver General Hospital, President of the Canadian Nurses' Association; E. Frances Upton, Executive Secretary, Association of Registered Nurses of the Province of Quebec; and Eleanor McPhedean, Victorian Order of Nurses, Calgary. All are to be congratulated. In Great Britain, Miss Fairley has so many personal friends through her international relations, that naturally any honour bestowed upon her is specially pleasing to us.

Under the heading "It is Trained Nurses We Need," the *Daily Telegraph* recently published an admirable article by Miss Gladys M. Hardy, S.R.N., in which she reminds us that "It is a startling truth that this country at the hour of peril is short of 12,000 nurses, and that the Minister of Health may have to use powers of

direction to encourage women to take up nursing." We agree with Miss Hardy that any form of compulsion or conscription in the nursing profession would be regrettable. It is widely felt that it would defeat its own aim by destroying the fine sense of service necessary in such a specialised profession, and it might bring into the ranks inferior types of less educated women, whose incompetence might be disastrous.

Miss Hardy asks: "How have the Government or the hospitals set about making good the deficit of recruits?" She points out that "war-time enlistment is having a bad effect on the lower paid members of the regular nursing service. Probationers found themselves earning less than temporary assistants and auxiliaries, and, forgetting that they had embarked on

a promising career with unlimited prospects, surrendered their contracts of training . . . to swell the ranks of the temporary auxiliaries. . . . This may affect the country in many important ways hereafter. Shortage of trainees now means lack of skilled nurses later. It is always the skilled, proficient woman on whom the country's health services must depend. . . .

"Girls must be helped to see that independence and security are only to be obtained by the hard way of self-denial and patience . . . The Government can help. It must see that trained nurses receive adequate remuneration, security and good conditions in the hospitals, protection from the competition of untrained women, and pensions which will enable them to retire with comfort."

The *Daily Telegraph* is to be congratulated upon realising and giving publicity to Miss Hardy's contributions. We hear that one of the most popular newspapers in U.S.A. has obtained permission to give further publicity to Miss Hardy's well-balanced views.

What is known as the V.A.D. question aroused by the military medical authorities has assumed controversy throughout Great Britain. To us it is simple, and the whole situation can be summed up in two sentences:—

- (a) In civil hospitals, V.A.D.s are employed under the same conditions as nursing auxiliaries.
- (b) In serving hospitals they expect the most fantastic preferential treatment *vis-a-vis* the A.T.S.

This preferential treatment puts them practically on the same level as State Registered Nurses and, in the Union of South Africa, they have recently been given the rank of officers.



Miss GRACE M. FAIRLEY, R.N.,
President, Canadian Nurses' Association. Awarded
the Mary Agnes Snively Medal, 1942.

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