

how Sidney Herbert, my dear chief, halved the death-rate of our troops at home." This letter was in a scrap-book which belonged to Lady MacCarthy.

In recent years letters from Florence Nightingale have been eagerly acquired under the hammer, and it is to be hoped these specially interesting specimens may bring a high price. Nursing organisations in the Dominions and in the U.S.A. appreciate with reverence any scrap of paper signed by the founder of modern nursing.

Of course, the King and Queen are setting an example of fuel economy in the Royal Palaces. We have no doubt the entourage will economise in hot tubs and light as directed. There are to be no fires in bedrooms excepting by doctor's orders. It is to be hoped the "luxury" hotels will be compelled to follow suit.

Fuel saving, which may affect health, has apparently become necessary owing to the usual lack of foresight upon the part of politicians. All the mushroom Ministries issue "Orders" having acquired autocratic powers, well knowing that the British people never fail to respond to a call on their patriotism. But that does not prevent us forming an opinion and expressing it.

Our opinion on the lack of fuel is simple. Had the labour of our miners, whose lives demand extraordinary self-sacrifice, been estimated at its true value in the body politic, these indispensable workers would not have been drafted into the fighting forces in thousands. They would have been paid a retaining fee and their skill reserved in the pits. This country cannot carry on and win the war without coal.

Now those of us who have enjoyed warmth, light and health without realisation or any sense of gratitude are being called upon to suffer inconvenience. Less hot water, less cleanliness, less light, and maybe danger to health. But let us own up, our own apathy and lack of sympathy is to blame. How many of us ever cast a thought to the source of our comforts? Few indeed, until war conditions threatened their loss. We hope the pinch may awaken a sense of gratitude for the services of men and boys who, year in, year out, have added to our comfort.

And there are others along with the miners to whom we owe a debt. How about all the dear animals whose lives we consume from birth to death? Consider the sheep (subject to ridicule), and yet do they not provide the wool which at this crisis may mean life or death for defenders of the faith at the seat of war?

Now that we are to be deprived of external heat it will be wise to secure the warm clothing which wool alone can provide, and thus avoid chills and disease which may have very serious results. Read tuberculosis statistics in the young of both sexes, and away for woollies to prevent it.

London Hospital Nurses are to have a change in their uniform. How thankful they will be to get rid of the "leg of mutton" sleeves, unsightly and obstructive as they are. The long tails to the Sisters'

caps are elegant and are to be retained for high days and holidays, but they again were in the way when Sister secured a little rest in an armchair, although the wise ones wore them detached at the back of the cap and could thus be easily removed.

Now that this grand old hospital requires the services of 100 Sisters, think of the saving in time and labour in the laundry where these adornments were starched and goffered. For outdoor wear, coats replace cloaks and capes, and hats supersede bonnets with strings. War has its uses in a conservative country!

We are glad to learn that our article on the "Chronic Sick" which appeared in the July issue has aroused considerable interest, several Members of Parliament having expressed approval of it. This is a matter on which it is the duty of the Nursing Profession to exert its influence for the protection of the helpless.

The British College of Nurses, Ltd., has already taken the initiative. It must give expert advice and press the cruel conditions to which many poor helpless old people are still subjected by ignorant public bodies responsible for their care. It is all part of the Assistant Nurse question, and the urgent denial that the latter semi-trained women are being prepared to nurse the poor carries no conviction, because it is undeniable that the rich and well-to-do are in no need of their services.

THE V.A.D. COMMITTEE.

On September 29th, Mr. S. Storey, M.P., asked the Secretary of State for War, in the House of Commons, whether the committee to consider the position of Voluntary Aid Detachments in relation to the services had yet been set up, and whether he would state the composition of the committee. Sir J. Grigg replied that "Arrangements for setting up the committee have just been completed. The agreed terms of reference are: 'To consider the scope and method of employment of Mobile Voluntary Aid Detachments by, and their relationship to, the services.' Colonel Elliot has agreed to be chairman, and a representative has been nominated by each of the three service departments, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and National Service, the British Red Cross Society, the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Council of County Territorial Associations. In addition to these representatives of the Government departments and organisations concerned, the chairman has suggested that Mrs. J. L. Stocks, who was a member of the recent Committee on Amenities and Welfare in the Women's Services, should serve, in order that the Voluntary Aid Detachments Committee may have the benefit of the experience of that committee. I am glad to say that Mrs. Stocks has accepted the invitation."

It is to be hoped that the committee will consider this question from a professional, not a social point of view, and that the demand of V.A.D.s to be admitted into Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service as "other ranks" with commissions will not be acceded to. Such a concession to untrained nurses would be unjustifiable, and could not fail to lower the prestige and efficiency of the military Nursing Services throughout the Empire.

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