

NURSING ECHOES.

Since our last issue Her Royal Highness the Princess Elizabeth has been in the news, and an interesting new portrait study of her, by Cecil Beaton, appears on this page.

Her Royal Highness is wearing the insignia of the Grenadier Guards, of which she is Colonel-in-Chief, and the Grenadiers are doubtless immensely proud of their commanding officer.

Princess Elizabeth is now nearing her majority and recently a message from the King was read and agreed to in the Commons in which it was requested that Princess Elizabeth should be included in the Council of State to serve on any occasion when the King was absent from the Realm.

The Regency Bill, which has now become law, proposes that the heir to the throne becomes a Councillor of State at 18, instead of 21, and excludes persons absent from the United Kingdom from the position.

It is the desire of the King and Queen that Princess Elizabeth should have every opportunity of gaining experience of her future duties.

The country will warmly sympathise with this sound policy. We know that her private upbringing has been soundly practical and inspired by a sense of duty: she is not only highly educated in the general acceptance of the words, but a good sports-woman, with a love of animals and Nature, and she has an adequate knowledge of the elements of anatomy, physiology and hygiene, as all girls should have who realise that health spells happiness. Male heirs to the throne have made tours in youth of the British Empire and its Commonwealth of Nations, and we can imagine no influence more potent for their future unity than to welcome the charming Princess who may some day be called upon to wear the most illustrious Crown in the world.

The latest reports from hospitals throughout the

country, voluntary and municipal, reveal the need for 12,349 more civilian nurses. A large number have been drafted into the Services, whose needs are still expanding.

The Army only takes State Registered nurses. It now needs many more, and as many others are going abroad the deficiency figures of hospitals in this country are increasing.

The Ministry of Labour has appointed 31 appoint-

ments officers to bureaux throughout the country to secure recruits for nursing and midwifery. Applicants will receive information there and can register for training. Hospitals will take probationers from the age of 18, and girls of 17½ can register for the Civil Nursing Reserve, which has a great many vacancies for those who want to serve only for the duration of the war.

Further demands for nurses are made by factories, nurseries, and for many other war-time needs.

The fact that the Labour Ministry has assumed control of nursing recruitment militates against its success. Many girls and parents have strong objection to Labour control of nursing, which until recently has been classed as a profession for well-educated girls. Also the official advertisements so widely inserted in the Press lay so much stress on what the applicant is to receive, never in any form appealing to a girl's sense of humanity or national duty, that the shortage is not to be wondered at.

The recruitment of student nurses and others should be in the hands of professional persons—nursing and medical—by whom the bureaux should be staffed. So long as the Minister of Labour governs nursing, just so long will many eligible candidates shy away from it.

We speak from experience, as girls of the right type whom we have urged to train refuse to do so through the Employment Exchange; Registered Nurses prefer to apply direct to Q.A.I.M.N.S, and to Nursing Schools of their choice. They have not forgiven the Minister of Labour for backing the de-grading Nurses Act, 1943



Photo.]

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H.R.H. THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH,
COUNCILLOR OF STATE.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)