

THE NEW EDUCATION BILL.

At this time when nurses are so fully employed and need every hour of rest they can secure, it is unreasonable to advise them to study proposed legislation which does not directly affect their profession. But the education of a people is of paramount importance to a nation's welfare, and when, as in England, standards are not up to date, it is our duty to help to improve them. Through the International Council of Nurses, British nurses have, during the last quarter of a century, come into personal communication with their colleagues in many lands, and realised their ignorance in various directions, and how especially handicapped they are on the Continent for lack of the knowledge of foreign tongues, whilst our colleagues around the Baltic, in Scandinavia and elsewhere not only know English, but its literature—we, alas! are often dumb.

The excuse that we have no need to speak "with tongues" as "everyone knows English," leaves us stranded—and all the flower of Continental literature fails to enrich our minds. Moreover, we are no longer the inhabitants of a sea-girt isle—in the safe keeping of our sailor men—no such thing, owing to the development of aviation, we are part of the great Continent of Europe, and can no longer afford to ignore the fact. Thus we must realise that education in its widest and most beneficent sense must now be acquired by the British people or they are going to be left behind in the new era, and that must never be.

THE NEW EDUCATION BILL.

It is fortunate that we have, at present, as President of the Board of Education the Right Hon. R. A. Butler, M.P., a man of progressive views and high aims. Thus the text of the new Education Bill now issued shows a number of changes from the proposals originally put forward in the White Paper published last July.

The Bill will supersede all existing Education Acts, and its principal proposals condensed in the *Public Assistance Journal* are as follows:—

1. The reconstruction of the national system of education into primary, secondary and further stages.
2. The provision of nursery schools wherever they are needed.
3. The raising of the school-leaving age, first to 15, and later to 16.
4. The completion of the reorganisation of the present elementary schools so that well-designed and equipped primary schools and secondary schools of a variety of types are available without tuition fees to all children.
5. The amendment of the law so as—(i) to emphasise the position of religious instruction as an essential element of education; and (ii) to enable the schools provided by voluntary bodies to play their part in the proposed developments.
6. The introduction of a system of compulsory part-time education in working hours for young persons up to the age of 18.
7. The provision of adequate and properly co-ordinated facilities for technical and adult education.
8. The extension of the existing facilities for securing the health and physical well-being of children and young persons.
9. The inspection and registration of all independent schools.
10. The adjustment of the present system of local educational administration to the new educational lay-out.

National Policy.

For the first time the Minister is given effective power to secure the development of a national policy in education. Instead of, as now, having merely the "superintendence of matters relating to education in England and Wales," he is charged with the following duties (clause 1): "To promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose, and to secure the effective execution by local authorities, under his control and direction, of the national policy for providing a varied and comprehensive educational service in every area."

The President of the Board of Education has stated: "We must never abate or reduce our highest standards. On the contrary, we must make it more and more possible for the finest human material to be drawn out and reach the top."

Incidentally, the progress of general education means imperceptible evolution in the Profession of Nursing and the gradual extinction of the semi-trained nurse.

THE NATION'S HEALTH.

There is no doubt that the Ministry of Health is waking up; during the past month we owe thanks for a number of most instructive leaflets on a wide variety of subjects. Alas! with so little paper and space we fear we cannot give the publicity we should like to quite a number. To quote a few subjects dealt with: Emergency Medical Services, the Organisation of a Hospital Rehabilitation Department, Civil Nursing Reserve, New Colour Labels for Insulin, War-time Conditions and Mental Disorders, Venereal Disease. In the latter subject we are specially interested, and we advise every nurse to do her utmost to help mitigate the evil, and stamp it out. *Yes, stamp it out. Why not?*

WHAT TO READ.

MEMOIRS AND BIOGRAPHY.

- "Admiral Sir William Fisher." Admiral Sir William James.
 "The Great Lady." Margaret Gilmour.
 "Cardinal Hinsley." John C. Heenan, D.D.

FICTION.

- "Child of the Night." Gladys F. Sharp.
 "Guerrilla." Lord Dunsany.
 "The House of Cedar." May Merrill Miller.
 "The Sign of the Ram." Margaret Ferguson.
 "There was no Yesterday." John Stuart Arey.
 "Time with a Gift of Tears." Clifford Bax.
 "Strangers Under Our Roof." Jean Ross.
 "The Tree in the Yard." Betty Smith.
 "Ascendency Home." Mrs. Victor Rickard.

MISCELLANEOUS.

- "The Home Guard of Britain." Charles Graves.
 "Bushido." The Anatomy of Terror. Alexandre Dernikoff.
 "My Country." Alexei Tolstoy.
 "Take It to Bed." C. B. Wyndham Lewis.
 "The Art of Growing Old." John Cowper Powys.
 "Government by Assassination." Hug Byas.
 "English Inns." Thomas Burke.
 "An Ulster Woman in England, 1924-41." Nesca A. Robb.
 "Scotland the Nation." Rosaline Masson.
 "Malayan Postscript." Ian Morrison.
 "Death and To-morrow." Peter de Polnay.

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