

WE MUST LEAD OR GO UNDER.

We quote the following Editorial from *Una*, the official organ of the Royal Victorian College of Nursing, Melbourne.

Britain must lead or go under.

The policy of de-grading Nursing standards, being pursued so disastrously by the Royal College of Nursing, in Great Britain, can have but one result—repudiation of reciprocity with Dominion Nurses the world over.

Those of us who have always been leaders do not intend to tamely toddle in the rear. To quote *Una*:—

COMMON-SENSE.

In one of his stirring statements Kipling has said "The ship is more than the crew." The progress and dignity of the Nursing Profession is more than that of individual members and the manifold anxieties and problems confronting the world to-day should induce in the trained and disciplined worker a unifying influence in the profession of Nursing, not a splitting up; a devotion, not a warring.

The Labour Ministry in Great Britain in 1943 has chosen to de-grade the progress of Nursing by establishing "a craft somewhat akin to nursing" entitled to be known as State Registered and to wear a distinctive uniform and badge.

Women with the tenacity, the courage and the qualifications to become trained and skilful in the fight for life and health of humanity should not be inextricably entangled, in the eyes of the public, with all and sundry who are only qualified to act as home helpers. Let these women, useful and necessary as they undoubtedly are, be called by their right name, but not allowed to pose as low-grade State Registered nurses. (Meanwhile the knotty problem of how to control a suggested low-grade nurse or her willingness to submit to rules and regulations has not been solved even in the abstract.)

There have been years of strenuous struggle for recognition and improvement in conditions by the body entrusted by Nurses to obtain, among other benefits, the title of S.R.N., and it is well that Australia at least has refused, by a 4 to 2 majority, to submit to the de-grading of the Profession. Surely the general public to whom doctors and nurses owe their worthwhile and unique training should not be cheated.

If unity ruled and all Trained Nurses were inspired with the solemn duty to become, and continue to be, members of the Royal Victorian College of Nursing many difficulties would be automatically solved. The College is not a mendicant but it cannot carry on, without financial support, its many obligations which, in the last analysis, are solely for the benefit of Nurses. Moreover, those who deny the moral necessity to be members are willing to take the benefits for which the smaller group pay. It would be well to remember that a Nurse owes to her training very much more than a mere livelihood and that the effect to create a low grade Nurse is not altogether new in this State, while those members who wear long-distance glasses vigorously opposed and frustrated any such scheme.

NURSES' PRIZE GIVING AT THE ROYAL INFIRMARY OF EDINBURGH.

Never was the Lecture Theatre of the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary so hushed with expectancy as when His Grace the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Marquess of Linlithgow, until recently the Viceroy of India, came to the Nurses' Prize Giving on Wednesday, May 24th. He was accompanied by Her Grace and members of their suite, by Mr. Little, Chairman of the Board of Managers, Lieut.-Colonel Stewart, the Superintendent, Miss Smaill, Lady Superintendent of Nurses, and various members of the Board of Managers and the Honorary Staff with whom he had made the customary official visit to medical, surgical and maternity wards.

About 150 guests, 30 prize winners and many members of the nursing staff eagerly awaited the ceremony. The handsome book prizes—almost all given by the Board of Managers and selected by the prize winners themselves, rapidly disappeared as Her Grace handed them to the nurses who filed up, curtseyed, and returned to their seats amid loud applause. Enthusiasm increased as the names of the runners-up for the Affleck medal, Miss M. B. F. Millar and Miss Catriona Robertson, were read out, and reached its climax in a burst of clapping when the Affleck medal was handed to Miss Zella Campbell. The Chairman then called upon His Grace who spoke of the high esteem in which nurses generally, and the nurses of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in particular, were held. When he sat down the Chairman asked Her Grace to say a few words: she spoke of the great need for nurses in India and the hopes she had that the women of that vast country would themselves come forward to take up the great work of nursing. Then she wished all the prize-winners success and happiness. Very briefly the Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Their Graces, and after a hearty response the party adjourned to the Florence Nightingale Nurses' Home for tea.

Despite wartime difficulties the recreation hall was a blaze of spring flowers, and the tables were laden with good things. There was much pleasant conversation; the principal prize-winners were presented to Her Grace, and when the Lord High Commissioner left with his suite the whole company felt that this year's prize giving had been worthy of the highest traditions of the hospital.

Would that we had space to publish the names of the long list of prize-winners, as we realise the encouragement of recognition to pupils in the Nursing School attached to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh.

The following five pupils are specially to be congratulated:

Miss J. M. Ritchie: "Annie Warren Gill" Memorial Prize for Theory and Practice of Dietetics.

Miss M. L. Hamilton: "Affleck" Special Prize for Medical Nursing.

Miss M. B. Millar and Miss Catriona Robertson, Equal. *proxime accessit* for "Affleck" Medal.

Miss Z. Campbell: Medical Superintendent's Special Prize.

Miss Z. Campbell: "Affleck" Medal.

THE RESIGNATION OF MISS E. D. SMAILL, R.G.N.

The resignation of Miss E. D. Smaill, R.G.N., Lady Superintendent of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, which takes effect in the autumn, will be received with genuine regret by her colleagues. To be Lady Superintendent of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, means holding the blue ribbon of nursing status in Scotland.

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