

NURSING ECHOES.

We are very pleased to learn from Mr. Charles Bessell, General Secretary of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, that a Memorial Prize Fund for the Nurses of the Hospital, as a recognition of the services of the late Miss A. M. Bushby to the nursing profession, is to be organised. The Nursing Committee which has the matter in hand has decided that in the near future an invitation is to be issued to the nursing profession, and particularly to those who might have known Miss Bushby, to subscribe to a fund to create a Memorial Prize at the Hospital.

The late Miss A. M. Bushby worked devotedly as Matron of the Queen's Hospital for Children at Hackney for 20 years; she represented Children's Nursing on the General Nursing Council for England and Wales for 10 years; and was organiser of the History of Nursing Section at the British College of Nurses, Ltd., with very great success.

We feel sure the Memorial will receive support.

We note that in his address at a recent meeting of a Court of Governors at Middlesex Hospital, the Chairman, Lieutenant-Colonel J. J. Astor, M.P., was fully alive to the changes in hospital management, which will be the result of increased Ministerial control, and "that the future holds many problems with regard to staff and general policy."

The difficulty of domestic staff in every department of hospitals is almost insurmountable. This, of course, is the result of Labour Office autocracy in its attempted monopoly of hospital service, and it is a pity the governors of our invaluable hospitals have not, ere this, united to prevent it.

Colonel Astor reported that at the request of the Government of India, the hospital had agreed to take a number of Indian women students for training in nursing so that they might later train their own staffs for their hospitals. This is a step in the right direction, where our great Indian Empire is concerned.

We regret Colonel Astor did not allude to the burning question now being discussed in the House of Commons—the demand by Registered Nurses that Regulation 19 of the Nurses Act, 1943 be amended because, without their consent, through legislation, their fees can be utilised by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales to finance the organisation of unqualified Assistant Nurses if necessary—that is, their money *can be used for a purpose for which it was not subscribed*, and that thousands of Registered Nurses are failing to pay their annual registration fee of 2s. 6d., preferring to deprive themselves of professional status rather than submit to injustice.

We regret Colonel Astor's silence in this matter, as Miss D. M. Smith, Lady Superintendent of Nurses at Middlesex Hospital, is Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and, therefore, partly responsible for enforcing Regulation 19 if necessary upon the rank and file of her colleagues on the State Register. We hope Colonel Astor, M.P., will consult Sir Waldron Smithers, M.P., who has the rights of Registered Nurses in hand in the House of Commons, and will see his way to help amend political ignorance.

We of course disagree with the policy of the Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Morrison, in holding Committees

of Enquiry in private, refusing to publish the evidence, and wish to thank Mr. John Watson and Mr. Henriques, Magistrates at Tower Bridge Juvenile Court, for their demand for reform of London Remand Homes, and their spirited action in relation to the Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the management of the Home for Girls' at Marlesford Lodge.

There was just one accusation in the statement made by these two magistrates to which we must not fail to allude, and that was that a girl child of seven sent to this Remand Home would associate with young prostitutes suffering with venereal disease.

This accusation could not be denied by the committee of two unprofessional persons, so far as medicine is concerned, but the wickedness of little children being associated with young prostitutes suffering with this disease, whatever the result, is in our opinion absolutely indefensible, and might be a criminal offence should an innocent healthy child contract in any form this devastating disease.

The London County Council will be wise to make no attempt to evade responsibility for such risks in future.

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and the Central Council for Health Education, are maintaining during 1945 the national campaign, launched in 1942, to educate the public on the subject of venereal diseases. Press advertisements, broadcast talks and films will again be used, and a special display of posters in all parts of England and Wales has been arranged.

This national publicity will be very much more effective if it is reinforced by local publicity. The incidence of the venereal diseases continues to increase, and the need for further education is urgent.

Local Authorities are therefore asked to co-operate with the Government by making the fullest possible use of the new publicity material which is offered to them in this leaflet.

A book which is being widely read is "Bridge into the Future," letters of Max Plowman, edited by D.L.P. Max Plowman died on June 3rd, 1941.

Incidentally, a letter dated October 3rd, 1935, addressed to Miss Ostle arrested our attention, and we fear that the reforms demanded are yet to be made in certain hospitals:—

DEAR MISS OSTLE,

Very many thanks for the book and for your *particular* kindness in connection with it.

Just at first glance I happened on p. 268. It caught me, as they say, in the midriff, for my first-born son died at the age of 12 in a London Hospital—died, in point of fact, of bronchial pneumonia from a cold contracted in the hospital; and as I insisted on practically living in the place at the time, "I could a tale unfold"; but that in the lapse of eight years it has been too painful to contemplate. Only I would say with the utmost conviction that the modern, scientifically-organised hospital is *the* most dreadful place in England at the present time—not excepting prison and the asylum. Any woman who could really reform the nursing profession at the present time would do a far more beneficial work than ever Florence Nightingale accomplished, for the servile regimentation of inferior

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