

### NURSING ECHOES.

It is interesting to note that Registered Nurses in large numbers realised their duty on Election Day, and went eagerly forward to support the "Churchill candidate." "I voted for the man of genius who won the war," writes one, "and had to forget the disastrous Nurses Act, 1943, for the time being, which has classed us with dangerously incompetent women and ignored our professional conscience. The time will come to deal with the new members by-and-by, and I mean to give them a dose of nursing grievances and demand reforms at an early date!"

Princess Elizabeth presided recently at the Annual Court of Governors of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, of which she became President last year.

The Princess, who conducted the entire proceedings, said that all would have a feeling of thankfulness at the prospect of happier and more peaceful conditions under which to carry on the work of the hospital. "Our buildings have suffered considerable damage, but both here and at our hospitals at Shadwell, Bayford, and Woking our doors have remained open for the treatment of sick children," the Princess said. "I feel that our people, especially the people of London, will not fail to recognise and appreciate the part our hospitals have taken in the care of the sick and injured during the war."

"One of the nation's greatest ambitions," she said, "will be to ensure better lives and better conditions for our people who have suffered so much, and I am sure that a healthier start in life for our children is a matter of the greatest importance to us all." The Princess added: "We look forward to continuing as an independent voluntary hospital, working in close co-operation with other voluntary and public services whose work may be allied to our own."

Brigadier-General Sir Hill Child, Chairman of the hospital, announced that the anonymous donor of £50,000 had by entering into a seven-year covenant ensured the hospital of the sum of £85,000.

At the close of the proceedings Princess Elizabeth presented Nurse Gladys Horder with the Walter Castle Prize for the best all-round nurse of the year. The Princess, attended by Mrs. Vicary Gibbs, visited all the wards and took tea before ending her visit.

The proposal of the *Lancet* to de-grade our profession still further by granting the title of "State-qualified Nurse" to semi-trained persons, so that the (S.Q.N.) may compete with the efficiently trained S.R.N. does not appear to have caught on; but one never knows what tomfoolery may appeal to an illiterate community. If only the persons so eager to de-grade nursing were compelled to be nursed, when seriously ill, by quacks, that might teach them to realise the danger of their folly.

Quite recently a child we knew, suffering with diphtheria, was got out of bed and seated upright whilst "nurse" made his bed. When she turned to replace him in bed—he was dead. The broken-hearted parents had no redress, the nurse was enrolled and thus guaranteed by the G.N.C. and the Minister of Health!

We have read the extracts from the diary of a tubercular patient which have appeared in *The Times*. Of

course, the officials of the sanatorium alluded to "went down his throat" in immediate denial.

Has the public said "Thank you" to the dear animals which have been working so hard for our comparative comfort during the War?

The Pit Ponies, we fear, being out of sight are out of mind, but surely it is high time these patient little animals were released from durance vile. Mr. William Telford, a miner, reminds us in the Press of our human duty where they are concerned. He writes:

"It is mainly true that ponies are rarely worked double shifts, but the fact remains that they are to my mind, in the year 1945, a legacy of the early days of coal mining. No doubt time was when pit ponies were almost a necessary part of mining haulage work, but surely the use of ponies nowadays is a reflection of an old-fashioned outlook consistent with falling output and a dissatisfied and unwilling body of men who are growing older in the industry."

"It is evident, even to the non-mining community, that new methods are necessary, and the pit pony is the symbol of a bygone ugly age."

How about the pleasure ponies on which apparently boys and girls in khaki, are learning to ride? We are informed the charge is 10s. 6d. the hour, and yet we can count every rib with ease. It is time the semi-starvation of these lucrative "beasties" ceased, and if every rider refused to mount a semi-starved horse, these ribs would soon disappear.

We have not forgotten the martyrdom of Dennis O'Neill, done to death by Reginald Gough, of Bank Farm, Minsterley, Shropshire, and the suffering of his little brother Terence. We are glad to note that Sir Walter Monckton, K.C., in his report, states that the Newport authority must accept the primary responsibility, and that Shropshire could not escape some blame for failure to discharge their obligations to these children, and that it is probable that in future much more humane regulations will be enforced.

The public must insist on much more kindly supervision where these poor children are concerned.

Penalising homes should also be abolished.

Why do so many girls decamp from Marlesford Lodge? Why so much restriction? Why not substitute a more gay and pleasing atmosphere? We wonder what the authorities would say if we offered a tea-party with fiddles and a drum and tripping on the light fantastic toe? It is quite probable that fewer windows would be smashed and potentates treated with less contempt. Some day we will tell the story of just such an episode in Nottingham nearly seventy years ago! when, in the absence of authority, twenty ladies of the washtub tripped it gaily to the song of "We Won't Go Home Till Morning" after a tasty supper of pork-pie, Stilton cheese, and ale.

During the War aged people have been somewhat neglected; it is right, therefore, that they are now to receive sympathy—and we note that several institutions are being organised to brighten their lives. The more freedom the better. Lady Michaelis has given Gowrie House, Eastbourne, and £50,000 towards its upkeep for paralysed Servicemen. We feel sure others will come forward and help this good work.

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