

SUPPORT THE V.O.N., - *Canada's Own Institution*



NURSING STAFF OF V. O. N. — Greater Vancouver Branch.

The Victorian Order of Nurses came into existence in 1897 as a national memorial to the late Queen Victoria, a Royal Charter being granted in 1898, and was formed primarily to supply nurses thoroughly trained in hospital and district nursing, for the nursing of the sick who are otherwise unable to obtain trained nursing in their homes. The Order is Canada's own institution, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, at the call and service of all, irrespective of creed or nationality. Nursing service is available for seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day, the poor always receiving first attention.

A substantial portion of the work done by the Order is that of maternity. Pre-natal instruction, competent and well directed nursing care at the delivery of the mother means not only life saving to both, but prevents invalidism in after years. And this is not all. By virtue of the sequence of functions the Order does a great deal to assure healthy citizens. Through pre-natal care and instruction better motherhood and healthier babies are assured; through competent and well directed care at birth there is greater safety for mother and baby, and a vast amount of chronic invalidism is thus avoided; through child welfare and follow up work, and the sum total of the care bestowed, there is a reasonable assurance of a healthy baby, a physically well-balanced child, a normal healthy man or woman, and finally, a good citizen and producer. The influence of the V. O. nurse by intimate contact at birth with her follow up work plays an important part in the after life of the individual. "Save the baby and you save the nation."

Nurses attend only cases under the care of a legally qualified medical practitioner, but, although bedside nursing is the fundamental principle of the Order, its activities include phases of work connected with family and community welfare, together with preparation for, and assistance at operations and confinements, instruction to expectant mothers, and, in

some communities, its nurses act as school nurses, social service workers, etc. Nurses do not remain in the homes, but give a visiting service for the length of time required to render necessary nursing care.

Where persons are financially able to pay, a small charge is made, but in cases of destitution no fees are expected. "If all persons in Canada needing hospital care this year could afford to pay for it, there are only half enough hospital beds to care for them." Every sick person cared for at home by the V. O. N. releases a bed in the hospital for someone who cannot be nursed elsewhere.

The Order has been continuously in operation in Greater Vancouver for the past twenty-five years, its activities being made possible mainly through the generosity of the public. There are seventeen nurses at present employed on the local staff.

Last year free visits amounted to 15,099 out of a total of 28,137 visits paid to homes in Greater Vancouver, which included 1,709 pre-natal visits to expectant mothers; 551 maternity cases attended; 3,394 infant welfare visits. "One child in eight born in Greater Vancouver is a V. O. N. baby." The total cost of administration of the Greater Vancouver Branch for 1923 was \$29,923.04, whilst fees received only amounted to \$9,753.71, leaving a balance of \$20,169.33 to be provided from outside sources, such as Provincial and Municipal grants and contributions from the public totalling \$16,837.32. It will thus be seen that the operations for 1923 resulted in a deficit of \$3,332.21.

An appeal is now being made for contributions, and the Committee in charge hopes to raise \$15,000.00, which it is conservatively estimated will be required to "carry on" for another year.

What would happen to the sick poor of Vancouver if the Victorian Order could not answer their call? Yet to continue its phase of community service generous financial support must be accorded by the public.