

in charitable and philanthropic affairs. Her ladyship was ever to the fore in performing acts of goodness and kindness, and scores—nay, hundreds—will miss her bounties, for they were numerous.

A WORD should also most certainly be given to the death of Miss Neville, one of Lady Rosebery's Nurses, who died on Monday morning last, in the Edinburgh City Hospital, from typhoid fever. Our ranks are continually being broken by the deaths of those who silently and faithfully perform their arduous duties in the midst of every possible danger, fearing naught, and doing their work well.

I AM glad to learn that the efforts of the *Record* and friends have secured Mrs. Duyck seven hundred and twenty-one votes towards her expected annuity from the British Home for Incurables. I hope that by the next election next May Mrs. Duyck may be successful.

I WOULD ask all my readers to note that a lecture to Nurses, on "Medical Applications of Electricity" (with demonstrations on living subjects), will be given on Thursday, December 11th, 1890, at three p.m., at the Institute of Medical Electricity, 35, Fitzroy Square, by H. Newman Lawrence, M.I.E.E. The chair will be taken by Miss C. J. Wood (Hon. Sec. B.N.A.). Admission free to Nurses on presenting tickets, which may be obtained on application to the Secretary, at the Institute.

I AM asked to state that the Baroness Burdett-Coutts has consented to become the Lady President of the Grosvenor Hospital for Women and Children, Vincent Square, Westminster.
S. G.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

TELEPHONE CLERKS.

"I hear a voice you cannot hear."

TRULY and sincerely may the telephone clerk quote this line of poetry. But the voice seldom, very seldom, contains aught romantic in its tone, and the words vary not save for the last. The order ever runs, "Hitch me on to" No. 5,703 or to 752, or to 99, or even No. 1. Number 1 not being in this case he who speaks is not therefore of greater importance than any other numeral. Cases have been known, however, when a regular flirtation has been carried on with some office clerk the other side of London town by a roguish young lady operator employed at that exchange

to which the young Romeo's employer's telephone is annexed. Then compliments pour down the telephone wire. For instance—"Your voice is ever soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman," cries the admirer gallantly, love possessed, if of Shakespearian turn. But these flirtations are few and far between, for a voice however low and sweet is scarcely a tangible object of admiration, and then the young ladies have not often the time, even if they have the inclination, to listen to tender words from some delightful though unknown swain. Besides, the eagle eye of the clerk in charge is ever upon these "damsels fair" who manipulate the telephone. These clerks in charge, as they are called, are responsible to the managers for any complaints from the subscribers, and are in fact superintendents as well as clerks, overseeing the working of the other operators. The operator on commencing only receives seven shillings and sixpence a week, until by practice she is perfect in her work. She then receives nine shillings, which sum is raised by yearly increments of one shilling until twelve shillings a week is gained, when she can receive no further increase of salary until she is passed, as soon as any vacancy occurs, into the "upper classes," when she can receive from seventeen shillings and sixpence to twenty-one shillings. It is from these "upper classes" of operators the clerks in charge are chosen. The rate of salary is low, but then skilled labour is not required, and no previous training is necessary. A fairly good education, a good memory, and quickness of sight and of hearing is all that is requisite. At one time all the young ladies were obliged to be the daughters of professional men, but this rule is not now adhered to, any girl of good manners and address being received. Applicants must be under sixteen. The National Telephone Company have four Divisional Managers in London, and a vacancy is filled up by that manager in whose division it occurs. I was asked to add, however, that the names already on the books are far in excess of the vacancies likely to occur, especially as the company, who are centralising as much as possible, require now a smaller staff of operators than formerly. The work is not difficult, but is rendered tedious by its monotony. The principal things are carefulness and a correct knowledge with regard to where the numbers are, so as to hitch the telephones on quickly; but as these numbers are arranged very well by a system of placement in batches of thousands, they are easily learnt, and then practice makes perfect. The hours are the usual office hours. There are still several Exchanges in different parts of London. In the largest, which is situated in East India Avenue, over two hundred and fifty

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