

Nursing Echoes.

* * * All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.



I AM glad to hear that Princess CHRISTIAN returns to England on the 21th inst., and all Nurses will earnestly hope that Her Royal Highness has derived much benefit from the rest and quiet which she must have needed greatly after her troubles in the winter, and her unusually arduous work during the past summer.

I SEE that the Meeting of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, which, in accordance with custom, was summoned to meet to-morrow, has, by the President's command, been postponed to Friday the 21st inst., in order that Her Royal Highness may herself be present. There is apparently not much business to be transacted, the Reports from the Executive Committee, and the election of the Executive Committee, and of Honorary Officers for the coming year, being, I presume, to a great extent, matters of form. But it is rumoured that there will arise from the former part of the Agenda, a special ceremony which may prove to be of national interest, so that the meeting is likely to be very largely attended.

IT is stated that Miss WOOD, who was, I believe, for more than a quarter of a century connected with the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, and who has served as the paid, or as the Hon., Secretary of the Association since its foundation, has declined to seek re-election to the latter post, her term of office having expired. It is understood that while of course the Association could not expect Miss WOOD to continue to discharge indefinitely the onerous duties of its Hon. Secretary, it is proposed to take measures to secure her valuable experience and advice as a permanent member of the Executive Committee and General Council.

CONSIDERABLE curiosity will be felt as to the lady who is to take Miss WOOD's place, for Nurses with sufficient leisure, who would be willing to undertake such serious responsibility and hard work, must be unfortunately rare and difficult to find.

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OUR influential contemporary, the *Sussex Daily News*, in commenting upon the Annual Meeting of the R.B.N.A. referred to another matter not mentioned in any of the reports of the meeting which I have seen, in the following terms:—

“At the meeting held in the Brighton Pavilion, the only topic concerning which there was any difference of opinion was “that blessed word compulsion” of which we have lately heard perhaps more than enough. Dr. BRADFORD FENWICK urged that when any member of the institution, being two years in arrear with her subscription, should fail to reply to application for payment, her name should be removed from the roll of the Association. As an amendment, Miss WOOD moved that the removal should be at the discretion of the Managing Committee. Though the lady carried with her the majority of those present, we cannot but opine that the more drastic measure proposed by Dr. FENWICK should have been preferred. Members of two years' standing who care about the Association, either in appreciation of the work it does or the privileges it may afford to members, will not forget to pay their small subscriptions. Such carelessness is scarcely compatible with the exactness in detail required of a trained Nurse. Discretion, with whatever care it may be executed, must lead to injurious insinuations of favouritism, and may give all the advantages of membership to individuals who have resolved to throw off its responsibilities. Miss WOOD's amendment will doubtless have full and fair trial; but the original motion will, we expect, be ultimately considered preferable in the interest of the Committee as well as of the public. A most gratifying feature of the debate and of the Report that preceded it is that the finances of the Association are so well established that there has been no occasion through lack of funds to insist too rigorously upon the discharge of the liability accepted by members. This feature is such an unique distinction that we can well understand that it has appeared to justify some little laxity. Assuming that the permanency of this condition is reasonably well assured, would it not be better to reduce to a minimum the terms of membership rather than suffer the conscientious members to bear the burden while the careless or unscrupulous escape their share.”

I HAVE made inquiries and find that there have been about 200 members who have not paid their subscriptions, and the great majority of whom have neglected to furnish the Secretary with their changes of address, so that it has been impossible to remind them of their obligations to the Association. This state of affairs was felt to be not only unbusinesslike but wrong, and it was justly thought that those who forgot to support the Association should not receive its benefits. As far as the actual manner in which such members are to be removed from the Association, I confess that I regard Miss WOOD's amendment as most unwise. It is a cardinal aphorism that penal powers should never be permissive, and our judges would probably object more strongly than the public, if they were empowered, at their discretion, to forgive or to punish those who were found guilty of crime. So, in this case, I am sorry for the Executive Committee that Miss WOOD's amendment was carried, because it throws upon them the entire onus of expunging the names of defaulting members, or of letting them remain. If they do the former, in many cases they

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