

ganizing power. In the Hospitals of Paris there are about six thousand Nurses of all classes. Of the six thousand only 550 have joined the union; but then the union has only been a few weeks in existence, and new adherents are coming in day by day. The union has been founded for the purpose of changing the Nurses' calling into a highly educated and trained profession, the members of which shall be fairly paid and properly treated. The new union is dead against the agencies—the old story. An agency has been known to pocket eight, ten, fifteen, or twenty francs a day from some patient whom it supplied, and to give the Nurse two francs. 'The agencies,' says Madame COUTANT, 'care nothing for qualifications; they send broken-down coachmen and housemaids to act as Nurses. Nor have the Sisters belonging to the various religious societies, who have acted as Hospital Nurses—as in the Hotel Dieu—been ever properly qualified. The most they had to offer was their devotion and the consolations of religion. We want more. The wages of overseers in Hospitals are ridiculously low—a pound a month, with board and lodging, for ordinary nurses; thirty-seven shillings a month, with the same, for overseer Nurses; and twenty-eight, with the same, for assistant overseers. But then, we Nurses are badly lodged and badly fed and we are badly clothed.'

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THE name of the Nurses' Union is already known over France and Belgium; and requests for skilled Nurses, for private families and public institutions, are constantly reaching the secretary (and founder) Madame COUTANT. She has a list—steadily growing larger—of trained and certified Nurses, ready to go anywhere at a moment's notice. She is the enemy of all Clerics who would use the profession of Nurse for the stealthy purposes of their religion. Madame COUTANT is a Socialist—that is to say, an Idealist; and the syndicate which she has founded is open to all, independently of race or creed. But the first steps to reform in this important profession were taken by a power even greater than Madame COUTANT'S Union. That power was the "City of Paris," the Municipality, which in 1878 established six schools for the training of Nurses. The Right hated the project. But the Progressists (as you have already learned to say in London) carried it, the Left arguing that the establishment of these schools was a "social obligation." These schools are under the direction of Dr. DE BOURNEVILLE. According to the standard set forth in the syndicate's programme, every certificated Nurse must be able to read doctor's prescriptions and to assist in surgical operations."

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THERE was a large gathering at 20, Hanover Square, last Friday, to hear Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK read her paper. As this appears at length in our issue of this week, I must defer, until another occasion, any account of the discussion which took place.

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ON the 9th inst, at St. Alban's, Miss MARSDEN gave a most interesting lecture relating to her work amongst the lepers of Siberia. At the close of the lecture a voluntary collection was proposed by the chairman, and the sum of £4 13s. collected.

S. G.

### Nursing at the World's Fair.\*

BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.

AN International Exhibition will be opened next May, in Chicago, a city which perhaps may not unfairly be described as the most progressive in the whole of that marvelously progressive country—the United States of America. It might therefore have been expected that in its chief features this World's Fair, as it has aptly been termed, would be a worthy successor of the many magnificent cosmopolitan expositions which have been held during the last forty years. But as a matter of fact, both in immensity of design and in microscopic elaboration of detail, it appears more than probable that the forthcoming exhibition will be the most wonderful, the most complete, and the most valuable, therefore, to all the nations of any hitherto held. Words fail one to describe how, in its preparation, nature has been improved upon by art; how by a system of canals and lakes the exhibition grounds have been changed beyond recognition and marvellously beautified; how vast palaces covering many acres of land have been erected—all built, decorated, and furnished in the most superb manner—to receive the artistic, the scientific, and the commercial productions of the world. And time would fail one, also, if a description were attempted, because the chief object of this paper is to draw attention to only one small section of the exhibits; because the importance of this Exhibition to Nurses and to Nursing is far greater, comparatively speaking, than to any other class of workers or to any other profession. This will, perhaps, be generally admitted when it is re-

\* Being a paper read before the Royal British Nurses' Association, January 20th, 1893.

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