

the Probationers under her; gain an insight into private nursing, if the Hospital takes in private patients; and, towards the end of her time, she should be able to take Head Nurse's (Sister's) duty during short periods. In this way she would be tested step by step, and so far all Nurses' training might be on the same lines, but when they reach this point further experience will be gained by different methods. Some may remain Head Nurses; some will seek experience for private nursing in special Hospitals; and others who have the gift for organization and housekeeping will try to fit themselves for Matronship by taking situations as Assistant Matrons or Home Sisters. There is one difficulty which has often to be met, viz., what are women to do who cannot afford to wait till they are twenty-five years of age to begin their life work, if they feel nursing to be their vocation? For them, I suggest, what would be of benefit for all, a five years' training, the first two years being spent in a Children's Hospital. No work, that I know of, affords a better field for the cultivation of keen observation, unlimited patience, and fertility of resource; these qualities a Nurse may well spend two years in gaining. Of course, if young women are just to be turned loose into a Hospital, what they learn will depend on chance and their own characters, and it is too often so; but under earnest teaching a very different result will be obtained, and it is a result much to be desired.—I am, Madam, faithfully yours,

E. J. R. LANDALE.

Edinburgh, 24th March, 1894.

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by Royal Charter.)



By command of Her Royal Highness the President, a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Friday, March 30th, at the Offices of the Corporation at, 4.30 p.m. Also a Meeting of the Educational Committee will be held on the same day at 5 p.m.

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Council will be held on Friday, April 13th, at 20, Hanover Square, W., at 5 p.m.

Sessional Lecture.—The Secretary begs once more to call the special attention of Members and all readers of the NURSING RECORD to the fact that the next lecture of the winter session will be delivered at 3, Hanover Square, W., on Friday, March 30th, at 8 p.m., when Miss Isla Stewart (Matron and Superintendent of Nurses, St. Bartholomew's Hospital), has most kindly consented to speak on the following subject:—*Nurses, their Recreation and their Work.* Admission free to members of the Corporation; 1s. to others. At the conclusion of this lecture, discussion is invited.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The Secretary begs again to announce that the Offices of the Corporation *have not yet been removed* from 8, Oxford Circus Avenue, Oxford Street. She wishes to call *special attention* to this, as several letters have been sent to 19, Harley Street, by various correspondents, which has caused a very great delay in their receipt; and, owing to this fact, she fears considerable inconvenience to the writers, a matter she much regrets.

Medical Matters.

CRIME AS A DISEASE.



Italian observers have for many years devoted much attention to the physical condition of criminals, and have arrived at the conclusion that criminality is usually, if not always, due to disease. In this, as it is well known, they share the opinions which have been expressed by medical men in this country, and which have found exemplification in the growing tendency to ascribe homicide to maniacal instincts, and suicide to unsoundness of mind. There can be no doubt that the conclusion is justified by psychological facts, and by the influence of heredity in many cases. Hitherto, the weak point in the proofs has been, that comparatively little attention has been paid to the condition of the brain in criminals, although it is a well-proven fact that many notorious murderers have exhibited strange bodily malformations. Recent investigations by Italian pathologists, especially in the examination of the brains of criminal women, have elicited the discovery, that, in a very large percentage of cases, evidences of gross disease, or of most unusual malformation, were present. And, in this connection, it must be remembered that in a large proportion of patients suffering from insanity, the post-mortem examination of the brain shows to naked eye inspection curiously little signs of disease. A well-known writer, in his standard work on *Insanity*, truly observes—"the mind of man is evident during life: after death we see only a mass of brain substance, a portion of which taken from a philosopher may closely resemble that taken from a madman, an idiot, or even an animal." In the inquiries, however, to which we refer, out of the brains of thirty-eight criminal women, which were carefully examined, no less than ten were found to possess marked disease. And so far as congenital malformations go, another Italian observer found that, out of seventeen brains removed from the heads of female criminals, no less than eleven showed most unusual and palpable abnormalities. The same observer, furthermore, discovered on investigating the brains of thirteen male criminals, only three which were in like manner abnormally formed. The conclusion to which these facts would seem to lead us, is that when women are criminals it is probably due to brain disease or malformation; their later developments being largely accounted for by congenital causes.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

A most interesting article upon this subject, by Dr. Lovell Drage, appears in a recent number of the *Lancet*, in which the author takes up the question of

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