

THE REGISTERED NURSES' SOCIETY.

In accordance with the request of several of our readers we have much pleasure in explaining the reason for the existence, and the origin and progress, of this Society. Until lately, the majority of Nurses who desired to obtain work in private houses, were compelled to attach themselves to Institutions conducted either by Hospitals or by private individuals. In either case, the Nurse was paid from £25 to £30 a year, and the Institution which obtained employment for her, took from the public the customary fees of from one and a half to two guineas per week. The result was, that, after years of work, the Nurse found herself growing old and destitute of resources, and when, in due course, she became unable to work any longer, her services were dispensed with, and, in too many instances, she had no outlook beyond the workhouse. Some four years ago, a number of persons, some of whom knew by experience the difficulties of Private Nurses, adopted one of the first proposals of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and formed a co-operative Society for Nurses, so that those who joined it could obtain their own fees, less a small percentage to cover working expenses. This was a great advance, and the initiators of it have always received, from us, the credit which is fairly their due. But, unfortunately, they did not go far enough, for they were not sufficiently aware of the importance of the Registration of Nurses to adopt in their organisation this great measure of protection to the sick. Consequently, a demand arose among medical men for a co-operation, composed entirely of Registered Nurses—that is to say, of the élite of the Nursing profession—so that doctors and the public could have a guarantee that the Nurses whom they employed had passed through a proper technical training, and, in character and efficiency, could be thoroughly depended upon. As soon as the Royal British Nurses' Association obtained its Royal Charter, some of its members had their hands free to adopt this suggestion, and the Registered Nurses' Society was duly formed last March. The essential condition for membership is that the Nurse must have been Registered by the Royal British Nurses' Association; that she is between 25 and 35; of the highest personal character and professional qualifications; and that she is in perfect health. The Society met with immediate and most gratifying success; its obvious advantages being immediately recognised by many of the leading medical men in the Metropolis. Every month since then, the Committee, which is composed of well-known medical men and Hospital Matrons, has been compelled by the increasing demand to elect new members; and, from the first, every Member has been kept almost constantly employed. The Nurses obtain their full fees, less a deduction of 7½ per cent. to defray the office and management expenses; and, co-incidentally with the success of the Society, several of the Institutions which have sweated Nurses of their earnings and have deceived the public by sending out inefficient workers, have closed their doors. These are facts which speak conclusively both as to the public and the professional benefit of the new Society. Those of our readers who desire further information on the subject can obtain it by writing to the Secretary of the Society, 269, Regent Street, London, W.

Lectures on Gynæcological Nursing,

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LECTURE V.

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IF the floor is not polished, the next best covering is a sanitary oil cloth, closely fitting to the wainscoting, so that it can be frequently and thoroughly washed over, and so kept perfectly clean. The Sanitary Linoleum, manufactured by John Barry Ostlere and Co., is specially suitable and valuable for the flooring of operation-rooms. But in many cases, especially in private houses, it is necessary to make the best of existing conditions. Then sheets soaked in carbolic lotion under and around the bed are very useful in maintaining a germ-free floor and atmosphere around the patient. The bedstead should be of iron with a spring mattress, and the whole of the bedstead should be carefully washed with carbolic solution the day before the operation. The bedding, of course, should be perfectly clean and well-aired. The walls of the rooms, if of paper, should be well brushed and cleaned; if they were lime-washed it would be preferable; the windows should be cleaned, the chimney swept, the fire-irons carefully polished. All ornaments, pictures, and other articles which harbour dust, are better out of the way, because cleanliness is the first essential, and artistic decorations are out of place, unless they are also strictly sanitary. The room should be warmed by an open fire, and thoroughly aired, the windows being opened top and bottom, for it is a point often forgotten that nothing is so destructive of putrefactive germs as plenty of fresh air and sunlight.

Finally, there comes the preparation for the operation itself which will devolve upon the Nurse. A strong table will be required, and so long as it is strong and not too wide, it does not matter very much what it is made of, or for what it is usually used. Like everything else, it should be carefully washed with strong antiseptic solution, and will require no other covering than a thick layer of blanket, and a pillow, over which a macintosh and a draw sheet may be usefully placed, because sometimes fluid escapes from the abdomen in considerable quantity. A strong table is necessary to hold the instruments, basins, antiseptic solutions, and brandy; and amongst these a small ball-syringe for the administration of an enema of brandy and beef-tea, if the patient seems to be collapsed, should never be forgotten. It is always well to keep the instruments all together, the ligatures, needles and sutures together, the drainage tubes and syringes together, and the stimulants and restoratives together, so that the hand can be placed

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