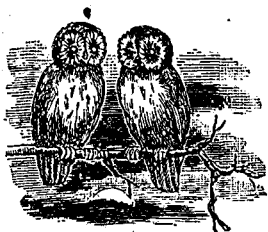


Matrons in Council.



A SPECIAL meeting of the Matrons' Council was held on Thursday, March 28th, to consider what steps should be taken with regard to the "Official Nursing Directory" which Mr. Burdett proposes to issue.

After a lengthy and exhaustive discussion it was decided that the Royal British Nurses' Association, as the only body of trained Nurses incorporated by Royal Charter, was the Society by which action should be taken.

Two resolutions were then drafted deprecating any attempt to lower the three years' term of training which the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Metropolitan Hospitals had approved; and requesting the Executive Committee of the R.B.N.A. to consider in what way the Corporation could best minimise the injurious effects of Mr. Burdett's publication. Mrs. Andrews was desired to forward these resolutions to the Hon. Secretary of the R.B.N.A., in order that they might be laid before the next meeting of the Executive Committee, on Friday, April 5th.

The regular meeting of the Matrons' Council will take place at St. Bartholomew's Hospital at 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 18th, when it is hoped there will be a good attendance of members, as the work to be undertaken by the Council for 1895-96 will be discussed.

The Conference will be held at 8.30 p.m. on the same day in the Medical Society's Rooms, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, when Lieut.-Col. Evatt will read a paper on "The Organisation and Working of Medical Aid to the Wounded in Modern War." All interested in the subject of the Conference—and it is one of national importance—can obtain tickets by applying to the Hon. Secretary at 22, Cheyne Gardens, Chelsea, S.W.

The first meeting of the class—which will be instructed by Mrs. Eva McLaren in the procedure of business at public meetings—will take place on Monday, April 29th. A notice of the place and time for the meeting will be given later. All Members and Associates wishing to be present will kindly communicate with the Hon. Secretary, 22, Cheyne Gardens.

MAUD ANDREWS, Hon. Secretary.

MADAM,—I much regret that I shall not be able to attend the Matrons' Council on the 28th inst., as I should like to have added my protest against the publication of an unprofessional Nursing Directory, based on no recognised standard of training or registration. But it is a subject that undoubtedly requires to be approached in a calm and judicial spirit, and to be discussed with impersonal impartiality. For it is not a question as to whether we Nurses like to be "directored" by this or that individual, but whether such a directory, when completed, would not be distinctly misleading from a public as well as a professional point of view.

A veil, an apron, a flowing cloak and six months' at a doctor's private nursing institution, already constitute

a Nurse in the eyes of a large section of the general public; if her name is further found in the pages of a well-bound Nursing Directory, her reputation will be firmly established.

Kelly's Directory itself, which has been quoted as an example, does not publish the names of unqualified assistants, but we have no guarantee that the names of unqualified Nurses will not appear in the pages of a Directory whose professional editors and standard of qualification are quite as much a mystery to the professional world as to the general public; the name of one layman, however capable in his own department, does not carry unlimited conviction.

But I feel as if we were threshing over old straw again—long settled arguments have to be brought forth; we fight, as it were, in the dust of a bygone battle.

Of the necessity for a settled standard as to the *minimum* amount of training to be required from a qualified Nurse, there is, nowadays, no more doubt than the necessity for a certain minimum of training and experience for a medical man. It would be a dangerous precedent to say that because a man were exceptionally brilliant, clever, or apt, his course should be curtailed, his examinations dispensed with. The standard is set for him as for his less gifted brother—he may pass it if he will, but he must reach it. And it is only the men who have passed the minimum standard that can find a place in a medical register, in a recognised directory. It would be equally dangerous to say that because a probationer was clever or apt *her* course should be curtailed, *her* complete training dispensed with. No directory, no record of trained Nurses should be tolerated that does not take as its basis the three years' training which has been settled by the best experts as the best general minimum standard of training for a Nurse. It is useless to raise the old cry that the time is not yet ripe for the three years' standard. Every Hospital Matron *knows* that her letter-box is crowded with letters from applicants who are anxious to become probationers on almost any terms, and from a practical point of view she knows also that the short training system is simply over-crowding the market and debasing the standard of workers.

For the lay editor of the proposed Nursing directory I have only one answer—let him publish the names of his professional editors, and let him accept the three years' Hospital Nurses' experience required by the Royal British Nurses' Association as the lowest qualification under which a Nurse can be admitted to the Directory, and I will accept his Directory; but until he does that it will be *anathema maranatha* to me and to every properly trained and qualified Nurse.

Yours truly,
M. MOLLETT, Matron,
Reg. Nurse.

Royal South Hants Infirmary,
Southampton.

MISS MARY A. SNIVELY, Lady Superintendent of the General Hospital, Toronto, gave notice at the late Convention of American Superintendents, of a motion to amend Article V. of the Constitution so as to make eligible for associate membership, superintendents of small training schools.

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