

Coming Events.

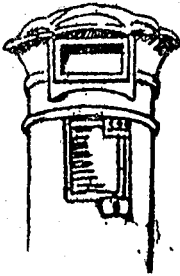
April 10th.—Meeting of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, 5 p.m., 17, Old Cavendish Street, W.

April 14th.—The Lord Chief Justice of England will preside at the King's College Hospital Annual Festival Dinner.

April 16th.—Ball, under the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, in aid of the funds of the Victoria Hospital, Folkestone, at the Town Hall.

April 22nd.—Anniversary Festival of the British Orphan Asylum, at the Whitehall Rooms. The Right Hon. Lord Rothschild in the chair.

April 27th.—Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, opens the Universal Cookery and Food Exhibition at the Imperial Institute.



Letters to the Editor.

Notes, Queries, &c.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—The importance to Nurses of employing the time they have at their disposal for acquiring practical knowledge of the art of Nursing to the best advantage is so great, that I venture to differ with some of the statements made in the Editorial of your excellent paper for March 28th, 1896. As a medical officer at both a General and a Children's Hospital at one time or another, I can speak with confidence of the nature of the cases met with in both Institutions. To say that heart and lung diseases are comparatively few in Children's Hospitals must be either a statement hastily made, or one resting on an imperfect idea of such Hospitals. No severe diseases are more common in children than acute lung diseases. The importance of rickets as a factor in their causation is admitted by all. Yet what is rickets but a disease of children? Measles has one of its most deadly weapons in the common sequela, acute pulmonary tuberculosis; and is measles more common in adults than children? Children, it is allowed, are more sensitive than adults to sudden changes of temperature, and what is a more common result of such an occurrence than an acute lung disease? Again, let us consider heart disease. What is its most frequent cause? Undoubtedly rheumatic fever. Is that disease more common in the child or in the adult? The answer is, in the child. And when it does attack the child, is it more liable to attack heart or joints? Most certainly the heart. Then, is heart disease rare among children? Why, nothing in the whole range of medicine is more sorrowful than the frequency of this deadly complication in hearts, which are not only striving to nourish the tissues of the present, but are called upon additionally for the supply of nutriment to the rapidly growing

and developing organs of the child. Children's Hospitals abound with such cases of every degree of severity. Chorea is a disease almost confined to children, and it is quite the exception for cases admitted to the Hospital to be free from cardiac disease, which is very frequently in an active state at the time; indeed, no cases require more careful nursing than a severe chorea, with its frequent accompaniment, active heart disease. Then, again, diphtheritic paralysis is met with more frequently in our large Children's Hospitals than in adult ones, and the dilatation of the heart met with so frequently in this condition, with its great danger, sudden syncope, requires the most gentle and thoughtful nursing. So much for lung and heart diseases.

Typhoid fever, I allow, is milder in children than in adults, but it is very far from uncommon in Children's Hospitals. Nurses do not get such good training there in this disease—not, I think, because of its rarity, but because it assumes a milder form.

The statement that digestive diseases are rarely seen in Children's Hospitals I must entirely disagree with. In the hot summer months, in all our large cities, and still more so in America, gastro-enteritis destroys its thousands. Yet these cases are never hopeless, and our Children's Hospitals take them in as often as they can, and cure no inconsiderable number, too, by diet and medicines, supported by Nursing, which must be of the highest order. Abdominal tuberculosis, again, is mostly a disease of children; and do they not waste to skeletons, and require the utmost care in nursing to prevent bed-sores? With the absence of obstetric material and gynæcological experience I entirely agree, but the former is not to be got at all our General Hospitals. The absence of surgical emergencies is an undoubted fact, but are they so common in private practice?

In conclusion, I should certainly agree that a General Hospital, as its name implies, gives the best general training, if it is a good one; but I cannot admit that the advantages of Children's Hospitals can be so summarily dismissed as they were in your Editorial. Indeed, if typhoid fever, lung, heart, and abdominal diseases were so rare in Children's Hospitals, as your article gives one to understand, I doubt whether any Nurse would think of beginning—much less ending—her training in such a place, and the result to the Nursing of such Hospitals would be deplorable.

Thanking you for allowing me to trespass on your valuable space at such length,

I remain, yours truly,

F. JOHN POYNTON,
M.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

[Our correspondent has overlooked the fact that in the Editorial in question we were discussing the comparative advantages of a Children's and of a General Hospital as a Training School for Nurses, and that we pointed out the "comparative" rarity of the cases in question seen in the former as compared with the number seen in the latter Hospitals.—ED.]

NURSES' HOME OF REST AT BRIGHTON.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Having spent a very happy six weeks at 12, Sussex Square, I feel I should like you to know how very much the Home is appreciated by the Nurses. I feel all thanks are due to you in having done so much for the Nurses' comfort and well-being.

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