

Nursing Politics.

MUCH indignation has been aroused amongst the self-respecting members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, by learning that without the consent of the Executive Committee a theatrical performance has been held at the Criterion Theatre, organised by Lady Duckworth, in aid of the funds of the Association. We are entirely in sympathy with those members who object to having their professional association paraded *in pauperis* in theatrical circles—under the patronage of medical men and their wives; and we further protest most strongly against any person—however well meaning—being permitted to publicly beg for the Nurses' Association without the permission of their representatives on the Executive Committee. Under the present circumstances, it is possible that our finances might be bolstered up by a ballet at the Empire, or the Alhambra.

The time is now at hand when the nominations will be made for the General Council List for 1897-98, to be presented to the Quarterly Council Meeting in April, and it is sincerely to be hoped that no attempt will be made to repeat the trick perpetrated by Mr. Fardon last year, by which eighteen out of twenty-nine vacancies on the Sisters' and Nurses' List were filled by thirteen members of the nursing staff of the Middlesex Hospital, and five from the Chelsea Infirmary, in addition to the ample representation these institutions already possessed on the Council.

The fact is that the List, nominated by the Hon. Officers, in conjunction with two or three members of the Executive, and accepted by that body, without knowledge or inquiry, is simply a farce. The members receive a printed list of names which merely appear in rotation, with no appended information concerning qualifications, or place of residence, so that in signing the list, the majority of the voters simply append their signature without the slightest knowledge concerning the candidates nominated for election. It is quite time this method of election was reformed, and representation obtained on more equal, liberal, and popular lines. That it is possible for the Middlesex and Chelsea nurses to attend the Council meetings, and at the dictation of the Hon. Officers, swamp the whole meeting by their votes, as they have done during the past year, preventing free speech, preventing the reading of important communications from the Matron members, although addressed to the Council, and (following an outrageous lead) by interruptions, vulgar invective, and umbrella thumping; is a scandal and a disgrace which is no longer to be tolerated. We can but hope that the new Council List will be composed of persons who at least know how to behave with decency, and order.

How can Private Nurses keep in touch with Modern Methods?*

By MISS MARGARET BREAY.

I THINK the subject chosen as the first for discussion in the present year by the St. John's House Debating Society is a very happy one, for this reason, it shows an absence of self-complacency on the part of the members, and this is a most hopeful sign. We are all of us apt to be content with our present attainments, and this is a real bar to progress. Mr. Sydney Holland, the Chairman of the London Hospital, has complained of a disease which he terms "Matrons' Chronic," which he appears to think is a very hopeless one; but it is not only Matrons who suffer from "Chronic," it has been known to attack Nurses also, and is, I should say, distinctly infectious in its nature. At present it does not appear to have attacked the members of this Debating Society and I hope it never may.

The first way in which we may keep in touch with modern methods is, I think, by *reading*, and I believe, from my own personal knowledge of nurses, that this means of keeping up to date might be used much more largely than it is. Of course when one works hard one is apt to turn to literature which requires very little mental effort in one's time off duty. At the same time I am sure we many of us lose much by not reading nursing papers, both in the way of keeping ourselves informed on the subject of nursing politics, and also as to the latest inventions, and practical nursing. It seems to me that it is a duty which we owe to our profession, and to ourselves, to read at least one nursing paper carefully every week from cover to cover, and if there be time and opportunity to read more so much the better. If there be only time for one, I should say read the NURSING RECORD. Perhaps I am not altogether an impartial adviser on this subject, but my reason for this advice is, that the NURSING RECORD is edited by a trained nurse for nurses, and moreover by a lady who has had exceptional opportunities of making herself acquainted with the needs of nurses, and who, as Matron of one of our largest Hospitals, made for herself a name and reputation second to none. If I knew of any other nursing paper which was edited by any one possessing the same qualifications I should certainly at once become a subscriber to it, but at present I do not. Perhaps when the appetite of nurses for nursing literature has become keener, rivals to the NURSING RECORD may appear in the field, but at present I am afraid we must think that it occupies a solitary

* Being a paper read before the St. John's House Debating Society.

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