

cerning the selection of candidates. We are informed that no sufficient qualification of special preparation for the duties of Army Nursing is imposed, and that precedence is given to those who happen to have personal influence, while early members of the Reserve with excellent qualifications are altogether passed over. Since the formation of the Governmental departments nursing has advanced from the position of a handicraft to that of a science. It is now recognized as the complement, and the indispensable helpmeet, of both medicine and surgery, and it is only right that its importance should receive due recognition and that a nursing department should be formed in connection with both services having in each case a well qualified Superintendent of Nursing at its head, and being controlled by a Nursing Board composed of competent persons. We hope that when Parliament meets the question will be taken up by Members of Parliament interested in the efficient nursing of our sailors and soldiers and brought by them before the House of Commons. It is very desirable that reforms in these departments should be undertaken without delay, or we shall have the humiliation of seeing the American nation—which only last year awoke to the necessity of an Army Nursing Service—with a well organized Nursing Department having a trained nurse Superintendent, while we in this country still plod along the lines laid down some thirty years ago, when nursing was just emerging from the very low level to which it had fallen, and its potentialities were possibilities which were only dimly guessed at. The question is therefore one which should be brought prominently before the public, and might well be taken as a subject for discussion by the various Women's Societies during the winter session. As an instance of the importance of making effective preparation for war in time of peace we may cite the fact that we have no permanent hospital ships, surely an extraordinary lack for an insular power. An object lesson as to the need of such ships has recently been provided to the nation. The *Princess of Wales*, which owing to the kindly thought of the gracious lady whose name she bears, left Tilbury three weeks since, and which had at great expense been hastily fitted as a hospital ship, got only as far as Deal before she was compelled to put back on account of her defective condition, and lay useless in the Thames until Tuesday last, when she should have been well on her way to South Africa.

Annotations.

A CONSUMPTION CONGRESS.

SINCE the establishment, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, of the "National Association for the Prevention of Consumption," a great deal of good work has been done in spreading a knowledge of the means of averting the spread of this disease. Eminent medical men, public authorities and societies throughout the country have taken up the movement, branches of the association have been established in various centres; and a quarterly journal has been published in the interests of the crusade. It has now been decided to hold a Congress in London of all those interested in the question. The Prince of Wales has accepted the Presidency of the Congress, and has expressed his intention of opening it in person. The spring of 1901 has been fixed upon as an approximate date, but a preliminary meeting will be held on the 18th inst. at the Gray's Inn Hall. A meeting of the council of the association was recently held at Hanover Square. Sir William Broadbent presided, and various details in connection with the meeting were settled.

PARCELS FOR SOLDIERS.

THE War Office, which has been besieged by inquiries, has issued the following notices for the guidance of persons wishing to send parcels to officers and men on active service in South Africa:—

1. Parcels, etc., for corps or individuals serving in South Africa *cannot* be received at the War Office.
2. Customs duties will not be charged in Cape Colony or Natal on tobacco, etc., addressed to officers and men serving there.
3. It is recommended as more satisfactory to the senders, that when the size permits, they should transmit the parcel by parcel post addressed to the consignee.
4. If sent, carriage paid, to the Embarking Staff Officer, Empress Dock, Southampton, boxes or parcels will be forwarded, without charge, at the sender's risk, by the first transport in which room is available.
5. The War Department cannot, however, undertake any responsibility for the distribution in South Africa, but every effort will be made to carry out the distribution as expeditiously as possible.

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