

Nursing Echoes.

* * * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



The Queen has consented to become patron of the Westminster Training School and Home for Nurses, founded by Lady Augusta Stanley, of which Queen Victoria was patron.

We are requested to announce, in reference to the appeal to women which has recently appeared in the Press for the permanent endowment of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, that if any ladies desirous of attending the meeting to consider the organization of the women's memorial to Queen Victoria, in connection with Queen Victoria's nurses, to be held at Londonderry House, Park Lane, W., on Monday, April 29th, will kindly apply to the Hon. Secretaries, Queen's Nurses Endowment Fund, 64, Cannon Street, London, E.C., a card of invitation will be sent in reply.

It is to be regretted that the inner workings of the Nurses' Co-operation are not entirely harmonious, and rumour has it that Miss Amy Hughes, the Lady Superintendent, has sent in her resignation. Changes of superintendents in such a society are not for its good, as confidence in its management is thus disturbed.

Complaint is made that the Nurses' Co-operation is too large. It has upwards of 500 members, so that it is very difficult for medical men to obtain the services of the same nurses when required. In our opinion, there are also two fundamental mistakes in its organization—it admits nurses on to the staff who have had only two years' experience in hospital ward work, and also admits specialists—mental and maternity nurses being sent out, who have no general nursing experience. There is absolutely no excuse at the present day for these inefficient standards, as hundreds of trained and certificated nurses now hold the L.O.S. certificate for maternity nursing; and with a little encouragement, hundreds more would be ready to gain practical and theoretical experience in nursing the insane. Sooner or later these fundamental errors must be corrected, if the Nurses' Co-operation is to deserve the confidence of the leaders of the medical profession and the public.

In nursing circles there are two parties both equally to be respected, which hold diametrically opposing views on the Private Nurse Question. One side considers that the co-operative system, whereby the nurses take their own earnings, less a small percentage for office expenses, and where the members live where they choose, within a certain distance of head-quarters, where only a nominal superintendence with regard to their personal liberty is possible, is the most just and best system. The other side consider the "living in" system better, an arrangement whereby trained nurses are engaged at a fixed salary, and in addition are provided with a comfortable home when off duty, with board and uniform.

There is much to be said on both sides, and a very interesting and valuable expression of opinion might be given by those interested in this branch of nursing through this journal.

After seven years' personal experience of actively superintending a co-operation of Private Nurses, we are still convinced that this system is the most just, and therefore the best, but it must be carefully organized, and most judiciously managed. The number of members must be strictly limited, so that each one is in personal touch with the officers. The Superintendent must be a highly trained nurse, with a wide knowledge of business, and then the members must be well represented on the Committee of Management. Beyond all, strict discipline must be maintained by a disinterested honorary nurse officer, who will not hesitate to keep the whole society up to a high level of work and *morale*.

In response to a cable from the Agent-General for Cape Colony, a party of medical men and of twenty nurses, selected by Dr. Patrick Manson, left England on Saturday last for work amongst the plague patients in South Africa. This is good news, as from a remedial and a preventive point of view the services of an adequate number of medical men and nurses are of the highest value. We understand that the nurses are to receive salaries at the rate of £4 4s. a week, with board and lodging, which is a liberal though not an excessive salary when the risks entailed are considered. We are glad that the Government at the Cape realizes that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and that it is willing to pay well for trained and consequently valuable nurses.

Amongst the selected nurses are Miss Emily Blake, who has had six years' experience of fever nursing at the Fountain and Western Fever Hospitals, and Miss Maria Victoria Evans, who has had eight years' nursing experience, of which six years have been spent in fever work.

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