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Editorial.

COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOW BEFORE.

It is a very happy augury for the future that already the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Nursing is having an effect upon the Committees of Hospitals in relation to nursing matters. We hear that in three large London Hospitals the Committees are considering suggestions made to them by their Matrons for placing the educational standard for the nurses on the most modern basis, and it is probable that other institutions will come into line also.

We have always believed that the influence of public opinion and public interest must have a most wholesome and stimulating effect upon nursing education, and events are proving this opinion to be a correct one.

It cannot be for the good of the community, or of nursing education as a whole, that each institution should settle within its own four walls what is an adequate system of training for nurses. The salt of wholesome English life is the competition and co-operation which are an integral part of it where men and men's affairs are concerned, and the sooner nursing matters are placed on the same plane the better. We should not then have one hospital certificating its nurses without any examination and another allowing probationers to go in for their examinations at any time which seemed good to them, but all would submit to the test of a uniform examination set by a Central Authority. Thus one training-school would have the opportunity of comparing the attainments of its probationers with those of other institutions, and nothing could be more wholesome or more calculated to produce efficiency in training methods and evenness of results.

It is noteworthy that whenever an opportunity of a central examination has been offered, women have quickly availed themselves of the advantages it affords. The examination of the London Obstetrical Society was by the Mater-

nity Hospitals and their pupils considered so desirable that the latter incurred considerable expense to secure the certificate granted, and the Central Midwives' Board and the Medico-Psychological Association examine nurses by hundreds.

The King's Hospital Fund has done much of recent years to draw attention to the question of Hospital Finance, and the fact of its decision in regard to the financing of medical schools from the general funds subscribed by the charitable public is proof of the influence it is able to wield in this connection. In regard to nursing, however, the King's Fund has been singularly silent and inactive, and the reason for this is not far to seek. The Council of the Fund does not number amongst its members any woman or trained nurse, and, consequently, has no one to give it expert advice upon nursing matters, neither amongst the inspectors appointed to visit and report to the Fund concerning the institutions seeking or receiving its aid are any Matrons to be found. It is quite clear, therefore, that the Council of the Fund can receive no expert report as to the nursing arrangements of any hospital, for the simple reason that not one of their inspectors is qualified to present such a report.

Meanwhile we are glad to learn that Hospital Committees are giving time to consider the education of their nurses, in which they are well advised. There can be no doubt that the Report of the Select Committee, which plainly declares that the State should step in and regulate the education of nurses, will have much weight with the Government, and it is likely that Committees of Hospitals in the near future will have to satisfy a Central Nursing Council of the qualifications of their training-schools for nurses to rank as such. They are wise to realise this, and perfect their nursing system to the best of their ability, so that their methods of nurse training, when weighed in the balance, may not be found wanting.

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