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Editorial.

SCHOOLS OF METHOD.

One of the first pieces of work undertaken by the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland on its foundation in 1894 was to arrange for the instruction of its members in the method of conducting business at meetings, a wise and far-sighted policy, and one which has contributed not a little to the success of the national and international work of the Council. The despatch with which its business is accomplished and the method with which it is conducted, which have now become proverbial, are due in no small degree to those members who arranged for the schools of method, in which in its early days the members learnt to manage their affairs. Mrs. Eva McLaren was good enough to give several "grinds" which have since proved invaluable to those who were fortunate enough to attend them. That the need for knowledge of the rules governing the procedure of business at meetings is felt by nurses is increasingly evident, and we have learnt with interest that some of the members of St. Andrew's House Club are now studying the subject under expert direction.

There is no doubt that those who are not conversant with business methods are at a great disadvantage when attending meetings. They may desire to speak, to move amendments, to record protests, they may from their expert knowledge have that to say which would contribute materially to the value of the discussion, but because they are uncertain when to speak, and of what they may or may not do, they remain silent, and those with whom they are associated and the cause they desire to advocate are the losers thereby.

The members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, during the stormy period which preceded the revision of the Bye-Laws, suffered sorely from the disadvantage of a lack of knowledge of business.

In those days co-operation was a new thing to nurses. Many of them were feeling their way, they were diffident as to making their voices heard, they needed encouragement, and were met instead by a determination on the part of the medical officers of the Association at that time, to take advantage of their ignorance, and to override them even when in order, to gain their own way by unworthy tricks and quibbles, which they were able to do by their greater knowledge of rules of procedure and of the conduct of business:

It was a hard school for a young profession, but the lesson has not been lost. Those who passed through it have learnt that they must rely on their own unaided efforts, that the things which will enable them to hold their own successfully are first knowledge—knowledge of the subject in hand, and knowledge of business methods—so that they may be certain of their ground, and of their right to maintain it; courage, without which no battle was ever won, perseverance, to endure to the end, and that faith in the justice of their cause which will nerve them to fight to a finish.

So strongly do we feel the paramount importance of a knowledge of business on the part of women who associate themselves together, that we are of opinion that without it they had better remain as isolated units, and therefore impotent, than combine without the knowledge necessary to enable them to manage their own affairs successfully.

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