

SHOULD NURSES BE VEGETARIANS?

THIS question has been put to us by a lady who engaged a monthly Nurse, and, on her arrival, found that she was a vegetarian, and that she declined to eat any form of fleshly food. They were in a country house, miles from a market town. "The cook, good enough in her way, was driven to a state of desperation by the unaccustomed dishes which she was required to provide for the sustenance of the stranger, while other members of the household spent hours in scouring the country side in the search for the succulent fruits of the earth which were considered requisite, but which our own kitchen garden does not supply." It is easy to see that the diet of this attendant was a source of great trouble to her employer, and, if the person in question is a trained Nurse, that she has not recognized an essential part of her duty. For she clearly was a hindrance, rather than a help, to those who had sought her assistance, and the primary lesson which a true Nurse learns is absolute unselfishness, and then she is ready to make any reasonable sacrifice of her own comfort to save trouble, which is already great enough in households where her presence is required. To do otherwise, is not only to fail in her duty, but also tends to bring unmerited disrepute upon her profession. With reference to the special question, we believe that beyond the trouble caused by the necessity of a special dietary being provided, Nurses require some amount of animal food to fit them for the best performance of their arduous duties, and, for various reasons, therefore, we would express our belief that, for the sake both of their patients and of themselves, Nurses should *not* be vegetarians.

THE HOSPITALS' EXHIBITION.

WE are glad to learn that the arrangements for this undertaking, which it is proposed to hold next year as the Show of the season, are making very favourable progress. It has already been explained in these columns that there will be a comprehensive exhibit of Hospital appliances and methods of working, and that it is earnestly hoped that the effect will be to revive and increase the interest which the benevolent should take in the Institutions which are more valuable, and more vital to the welfare of the sick poor than any other form of charity. They have a great opportunity of bringing their work and their wants prominently before the public, and it may be expected that their managers will actively support those who are endeavouring to diffuse such useful knowledge. It seems probable that the exhibit of nursing appliances and models will be one of the most complete, and therefore, the most instructive that has ever been previously collected together, so that Nurses will also derive profit as well as pleasure from the exhibition. The profits, it is stated, are to be divided amongst metropolitan hospitals, and there are very few, unfortunately, which can confess that they stand in no need of further funds.

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The
Royal British Nurses' Association,

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRESIDENT.



THE Royal British Nurses' Association is the natural fruit of a growth which struck its roots into the soil of our country during the Crimean war, when all hearts were wrung with anxiety for the sick and wounded languishing in the East, and warmed with gratitude to Florence Nightingale and the devoted helpers who had accompanied her on her errand of mercy. But the better part of a generation passed before the tree commenced to show vigorous growth and spread its branches over the three kingdoms.

About that time, it began to be felt that that care of the sick which most naturally falls to the lot of woman must pass from hands often unskilled, though willing, to others which are guided by cultivated perceptions. Thus it came about, that there arose, first in one direction and then in another, institutions for the training of Nurses in connection with the great Hospitals of London and the Counties. All of these have done good work, some in a greater and others in a less degree having contributed materially to raise the standard of training and efficiency in Nurses. But it must be admitted that the result of all these independent efforts has been attained without any common understanding or action—in fact, without co-ordination, and, therefore, leaves much to be desired. One institution gives the seal of its approval to its pupils and considers them fully trained in one year, another in two, some in three; each has its own curriculum, and each its own standard of efficiency. The term "trained Nurse" has not even a definite meaning. It is made to cover ever varying and ever different degrees of proficiency, and to the initiated has ceased to convey any real meaning. But even worse, the title has been, and daily is, assumed by Probationers who have been rejected after a trial of a few months, and even a few weeks, as physically, mentally, for morally unqualified for the vocation

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