

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Her Royal Highness the President, Princess Christian, who has been staying in Germany, during the last two months, will return shortly to Cumberland Lodge. She intends to be present at the first Council Meeting of the Session, to be held on the 27th instant, at 5 p.m., at 20, Hanover Square.

It is to be hoped that the devotion to duty exhibited by the President, will inspire the members of the Council to fully appreciate the responsibility which they incur in accepting a seat on the governing body of the Chartered Corporation, and that they will permit nothing, excepting prior duties, to prevent their attendance at the Quarterly Meetings.

The official report at the October Council is necessarily of a somewhat meagre nature, owing to the fact of the preceding annual meeting of members; but it must be borne in mind that it is at the October Council that the members for the forthcoming Executive are elected, and that, owing to the fact that the Bye-Laws have been recast upon the incorporation of the Association by Royal Charter, a number of vacancies will have to be filled up.

The utmost gratification that has been expressed that Mrs. Coster, Lady Superintendent of St. George's Hospital—one of the most experienced trained Nurses in the kingdom—and Miss Wedgewood, Lady Superintendent of the Royal Free Hospital—a Nursing School which has of late years come well to the front in modern methods of teaching—have become members of the Association, and that their advice will be available on the Executive Committee.

Until last winter, when Dr. Caiger gave three most instructive Lectures on "Fevers and Fever Nursing," the Sessional Meetings of the Association were composed of six separate monthly addresses on subjects of Nursing interest; but the large and enthusiastic attendance at Dr. Caiger's post graduate course encourages the belief that the members would appreciate further courses of Lectures on the Nursing of special cases; it would be well if so, that they should communicate with the Secretary at once, as the programme for the winter meetings is now being arranged by a Sub-Committee.

It seems almost impossible that, in a few weeks, the Annual Conversazione will take place. How swiftly the year has flown away, and yet what great events in the history of Nursing have been accomplished in 1893. The Incorporation of the Association by Royal Charter; the first competitive exhibition of Nursing appliances, and the Nursing Conferences at Chicago. May 1894 be as productive of energy and progress.

The case of Maria Van der-Ben may not have been brought under the notice of her colleagues. This Nurse, aged 60, is a candidate for admittance to the Royal Hospital for Incurables, and would be grateful for help to obtain votes. She has been suffering for some time lateral curvature of the spine and debility, consequent upon her avocation as a Nurse, and is now quite unable to earn her livelihood. Her relations are not in a position to help her, and her case is strongly recommended by Miss Ward, Lady Superintendent of St. Cyprian's Home for Incurables, North Bank, 3, Portman Mansions, London. Colleagues blessed with health and youth, please help.

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Nursing Echoes.

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THE Article on the Royal British Nurses' Association, in this month's *Atalanta*, from the pen of Princess CHRISTIAN, has caused great interest amongst a circle of readers who do not see the Nursing papers. Her Royal Highness gives briefly some of the considerations which led to the formation of the Association, and sets forth its aims and work in the clear and sympathetic language for which she is renowned. A note of warning to the unsuitable is sounded in the following paragraph.

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"It is very commonly held that it is so easy and natural for women to become Nurses, that, if other occupation fail, that profession lies within easy reach of all. Let me say that no greater fallacy could possibly exist. There is no vocation that requires more study, more education, or a greater combination of qualities, than that of a Nurse. Though women are doubtless endowed with great natural aptitudes for Nursing, by reason of their sympathy and delicacy of perception, those capacities, untrained and uncultured, do not, in themselves, constitute their possessor an efficient Nurse. Years of hard work, of education of mind and body, and of experience, combined with sympathy, gentleness and tact, are essential. To some this assertion may seem to be an exaggeration, but those who have known illness, or who have watched others through long and anxious hours of suffering, will accept them as self-evident truths."

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How wise it would be if the friends of prospective Probationers would bear these facts in mind. Is it not the experience of many Matrons, that two-thirds of the candidates who apply for admission to our training schools (if judged by a high standard of intelligence, education, and physical strength) are quite unsuited for the work they propose to do? Is it not rather the exception than the rule that "the pick" of our daughters are considered by their parents the right applicants for admission to be trained as Nurses? If she is "a beauty," she must marry; if intellectual, she must teach; if she has a special talent for the arts, they must be cultivated; if she possesses a combination of womanly graces, she must abide at home at any cost. Have we a daughter we can spare for what appears to the uninitiated the commonplace drudgery of a Hospital Nurse? Yes. But, metaphorically, she squints, or has a hump, or is in reality "deficient in intellect," or—commonest and most desperate of reasons—"she can't get on

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