

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by Royal Charter.)



THE quarterly meeting of the General Council will be held on Friday, April 13th, at 20, Hanover Square, W., at 5 p.m.

A special meeting of the Executive Committee will take place, at 4.30 p.m., on Monday, the 9th, at the Offices of the Corporation.

A meeting of the Executive Committee was held on Friday, the 6th inst.

The first of a Course of three Lectures on "Practical Points in the Nursing of Throat, Nose, and Ear Cases," will be delivered by R. Lake, Esq., F.R.C.S., on Monday, April 16th, at 3, Hanover Square, W., at 8 p.m. Admission free to all members; 1/- to others.

It has been decided that the Educational Course of Lectures of the Royal British Nurses' Association, which are under the special patronage of H.R.H. Princess Christian, the President, and are designed to meet the requirements of those who are interested in Nursing, shall not commence until the first week in October. The Course consists of the following subjects:— "Elementary Anatomy," Mr. Walsham, F.R.C.S.; "Physiology," Dr. Schofield; "Hygiene and Chemistry," Dr. Louis Parkes; "Domestic and Ward Management," Miss Josephine de Pledge, Matron Chelsea Infirmary; "Practical Nursing," Miss Isla Stewart, Matron St. Bartholomew's Hospital; "Invalid Cooking." The full syllabus of these Lectures will be published in the NURSING RECORD and Nurses' Journal later on, so that arrangements may be made with the Secretary by those who wish to avail themselves of the teaching. The price will be £2 2s. per Course of twelve Lectures, or £10 10s. for the whole series.

DAISY ROBINS,
Secretary of the Corporation.

SESSIONAL MEETING.

A most successful meeting was held on Friday, March 30th, at 3, Hanover Square, W., at 8 p.m., when Miss Isla Stewart (Matron and Superintendent of Nurses of St. Bartholomew's Hospital) delivered an interesting lecture, entitled "Nurses, their Recreation and their Work." Mr. Pickering Pick, one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Executive Committee, presided, and about 100 members of the Corporation and their friends were present, the greatest interest in the subject being displayed throughout.

Miss Stewart said, after a few opening remarks, "It seems to me that we have heard enough about Nurses and their wingless angelic condition, about their work with its hardships and unselfishness, and we have heard so little about the amusements which are so necessary to their well-being. It is true these Nurses we read and hear most about do not require relaxation. They rise early, go to bed late, and eat only the bread of labour. They bend all day over their suffering patients, and say such sweet soothing things, and they are never tired or irritable. I suppose they die

young, or marry, and their husbands have to bear their monotonous cheerfulness, their awful amiability, and to listen to their sweet platitudes, till death divides them—at any rate, one never meets them. The Nurses, I seem to know the best, are mentally and physically healthy women, who have as keen a taste for pleasure as for duty, and who do the latter best when they have a reasonable amount of the former."

Concerning the greater work and responsibility of Nurses now-a-days, as compared with formerly, Miss Stewart was very happy in her illustration. "When I was a Sister, twelve years ago, we washed the sponges well with soap and water, rinsed them in hot water, then in cold, wrung them out of 1 in 60 carbolic, and they were ready for use. Now they are washed first with soap and soda, then rinsed in water, then put to steep in an antiseptic for so many hours, then washed and put in another antiseptic for so many hours, then put in acid to whiten them, then washed and steeped again, and then the surgeon takes away a bit of one, and if he succeeds in making it grow germs in a glass tube, it has all to be done again, or if used the patient may grow germs, or the Nurse may, or some other equally awful thing may happen."

Miss Stewart made an eloquent appeal to Nurses, for the sake of their work and of their patients, as well as for their own bodily and mental health, to have some interests outside their special work, and not to narrow their lives entirely into one groove. Miss Stewart strongly and very wisely advised that Nurses should, as much as possible, indulge in country walks, and gave details showing how cheaply and easily London Nurses could get into the country.

Miss Stewart recommends golf and other out-door exercises for Nurses, and evidently upholds the cardinal importance of the "sound mind in a sound body." But she equally strongly disapproves of those who work too much as of those who work too little. She says "we may roughly divide women into two classes, those who always play and those who always work. Those who always play have not yet learnt the joy of work. With them we have nothing to do; we are not of them, they are not of us. We are working women, and we are apt to be too much taken up with the fact; too apt to think we may lose our title to it if we play; so we work too much and play too little. I have been told that, in the old coaching days, the road that killed the most horses was the Windsor Road. It was so level, the horses got no rest from change of action." For winter occupation, Miss Stewart advises that some subject outside Nursing should be taken up and studied, and she specially calls attention to the valuable and most interesting courses of lectures which are given at the Gresham College by specialists in every branch of Science, Art, and Literature. Finally, the advantages of reading as a recreation were rightly insisted upon, but Miss Stewart spoke strongly against the weak and trashy novel, which only ruins the mental digestion. We confess to a strong sympathy with those who chose a good novel at the fireside as their form of recreation. When mind and body has been overstrained, many of the best brain workers of this and other days have said that even a nonsensical novel—so long as it is readable—relaxes the mental tension as no other remedy does.

Altogether the lecture was a most interesting one, and we wish our space permitted us to quote more largely from it.

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