

obtain employment through a distinctly professional agency, admission to which will depend solely upon the excellence of the training which they have received. Medical men are equally benefitted by the new scheme, because they gain at once a means of obtaining the services of Nurses who are not only thoroughly trained, but who are under direct professional control. It has been a grave cause of reproach hitherto that no doctor could tell, when he obtained a Nurse for the first time, whether or not she was suited to the case for which she was required, nor whether or not she was competent to undertake the duties required of her; while the chances were immeasurably in favour of the probability that she was under no professional control whatever. All this will be altered under the new Society, for which only registered members of the Royal British Nurses' Association of the highest qualifications will be eligible; because these, by the conditions of their membership, have the greatest inducements to maintain intact their reputation and character.

It is satisfactory to learn that, as might have been expected, a large number of leading members of the medical profession have given their cordial adhesion to this scheme, and have promised it their invaluable assistance and support. It is proposed to commence with a limited staff of Nurses, and to charge each one a commission on her earnings to the extent of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., in order to cover the necessary office and other expenses.

The management of the new Society has been undertaken by a small Committee consisting of well known medical men and the Matrons of some of our largest Metropolitan Hospitals. The Nurses will not be asked to furnish the necessary funds for the inception of the scheme. As we have said, only a small staff will be selected at first, and, as the scheme grows in success, fresh workers will be added to the list. The most scrupulous care will be taken in selecting the members of the new co-operation, but the first essential condition is that every applicant must be a registered member of the Royal British Nurses' Association. We hope, shortly, to be able to announce further details of the scheme, and, meanwhile, any who are eligible and who desire to apply for membership of the Registered Nurses' Society, will find further particulars in our advertisement columns this week.

There is only one other point to which we need refer, but it is one upon which there must be no misconception. There is no connection, official or unofficial, between the Royal British Nurses' Association and the Registered Nurses' Society. The two bodies are entirely distinct, and will be managed by quite separate Committees. On the other hand, however, the new Society will have the advantage of working with the sanction and the complete approval of the Chartered Corporation.

#### SECTARIAN DIFFERENCES.

It is a matter of constantly recurring difficulties in some Hospitals, and the ground of constantly repeated charges against their management, that differences are made, or are supposed to be made, between the patients of different sects and religions. There can be no dispute that, on the one hand, just as illness respects neither creed nor rank, so Hospitals, above all other Institutions, should be absolutely unbiassed by sectarian views in their treatment of the sick within their walls. Furthermore, Hospitals are always willing to receive donations, subscriptions, and legacies from all sections of the community, whatever the particular creed which the benefactor may profess, and, therefore, no differences whatsoever should be made which are founded upon the different religions which the inmates of such Institutions may hold. This reasoning applies not only to patients, but to the officials of the Hospital, and we maintain, therefore, that the creed of a Nurse should be neither impediment nor assistance to her so far as her admission and promotion in a Hospital is concerned. There is unfortunately, however, a very strong feeling that at some Institutions, which we need not particularize at this moment, differences are made to patients who do not belong to the precise form of religion upheld by the managers of the Institution; while, so far as Nurses are concerned, it is well known that at more than one prominent Hospital, an applicant whose views upon the Articles of the Church of England are not regarded as strictly orthodox has no chance whatever of obtaining the benefits of training. In some of these Institutions, indeed, it is a regulation which is enforced with the severity of the laws of the Medes and Persians, that certain Church observances must be kept by the members of the Nursing staff—a fact which practically debar all who have conscientious objections to such a ritual from sharing in the advantages which the public, without distinction of creed or sect, are asked, and generously contribute, to maintain. This appears to us to be not only straining the powers of the committees of these Institutions to an extent which is not warranted by their trusteeship, but we feel confident that it is a course which is both unfair to those who are adversely affected by such rules, and, in the long run, must be of considerable detriment to the interests of the Institution itself.

#### SUICIDE AMONGST NURSES.

During the last few months there have been several lamentable cases in which Nurses engaged in Hospital work have taken their own lives. There is too much reason to fear that the pressure of work and responsibility, which devolve in some Institutions upon the Nursing staff, is too great a strain for the nervous system of some women to bear with safety. The latest case is that of Nurse Bevan, of the London Hospital, who committed suicide there last week. It was stated at the inquest that she had been strange and subject to delusions for about three months, and that one of the doctors arrived at the conclusion that she was suffering from lunacy, a month ago. It certainly appears strange that the authorities should have kept a person—whom they believed to be a lunatic—on duty as a Nurse, and that no precautions should have been taken to prevent her—with the unlimited means at her disposal—doing harm to herself or to anybody else.

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