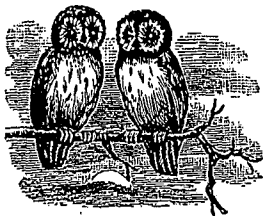


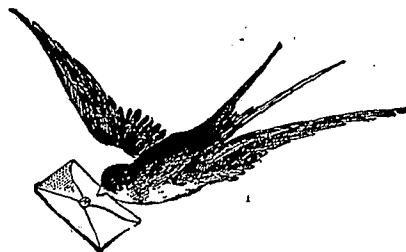
## The Matrons' Council.



Our attention has been called to the fact that attempts are being made to sow dissension in our ranks by making misleading statements concerning our work. These emanate from the same quarter from which the only opposition in the Press to the Royal British Nurses' Association arose.

That opposition was wisely ignored by the Association, and it proved to be the most dignified course of action. The Matrons' Council is the natural outcome of the success of the Royal British Nurses' Association. The Royal Charter has practically converted Nursing into a profession incorporated and recognized by the State. It has made it essential for many reasons that the leaders of the profession—the Matrons of Hospitals and Infirmaries throughout the Kingdom—should be drawn closer together so that they can take in concert the various steps which the rapid advance of Nursing education is making imperative upon the Managers of our Nurse Training Schools. We venture to assert, and we believe there are many who agree with us, that we Matrons will not be doing our duty to our Hospitals, to our Nurses, nor even to ourselves, if at this critical period in the History of Nursing we do not join hands with all our colleagues, and in that Unity from which alone true strength is born, seek that assistance and that counsel which we all need, and which we all can give. Standing isolated and alone we have lost, in the past, many chances of helping others as of being helped ourselves. There is no excuse for such selfishness in future. We are standing at the parting of the ways—between the old and the new—in the Nursing world. With a rapidity characteristic of the age in which we live, the evolution of our profession is taking place, and upon the form which the training of Nurses takes, depends, to a great extent, their future work and usefulness. We have no hesitation in saying, that inasmuch as Nursing education should be complete and thorough, so it should be based upon definite uniform standards of time, of methods, of theory and of practice; and, furthermore, that it is only by forethought and care, by consultation with all, by the proposals of a few tempered by the wisdom of many, that we can arrive at such conclusions. The Matrons' Council appears to us to supply the opportunity for such Union—for such consultation, for such discussion, of which many Matrons have felt the need, and for which at the present juncture there seems to be an absolute necessity. On the ground, then, of their duty to their profession, and to their Nurses, we venture to hope that all Matrons will join the Matrons' Council. The whole community of Nurses owe Miss Isla Stewart a debt of gratitude in thus coming forward to initiate a movement which commends itself to every Matron of liberal views, and who is in true sympathy with her colleagues.

WITHOUT KITCHEN FIRE.—Hot Water instantly night or day. Boiling Water in a minute. Warm Bath when wanted. Ewart's "Lighting Geyser" Factory, 346-350, Euston Road. Immense stock of Plunge Baths on view in new Show Rooms. When gas is not laid on the "Geyser" may now be successfully worked with petroleum.



## Our Foreign Letter.

### A NURSING COLONY.

THE practical results of organised Christian philanthropy on a large scale may be seen at Bielefeld, in Westphalia, in the extraordinary settlement, termed "the Congregation of Zion," a settlement arranged on the *home* plan, at which nearly 1,500 epileptics receive scientific treatment, united (as far as this is possible) with *family* interests and regular employment.

To a great extent, this colony owes its marvellous development to the efforts of a German nobleman, Herr von Bodelschwingh. Quite recently, this gentleman's biblical tenets on the subject of epilepsy gave some offence in scientific circles. The answer to the malcontents was to the effect that Herr von Bodelschwingh had obtained results for good such as few similar institutions can show, and that there was no law to hinder others who thought differently from founding other settlements on their own plans.

Here, in Bielefeld, Nursing Sisters and Brothers (Deacons and Deaconesses) work in harmony for the same cause, assisted to a great extent by the patients themselves.

On the 4th June, 1867, the first "House-Father" entered a small gabled house, bought by some philanthropists of Bielefeld as a home for epileptics. The name of "Bethel" (I. Mos. xxxv. 3) was given to this house. On the 4th October of the same year, four epileptics found shelter here. Very soon it was necessary to enlarge this house, and when in 1874, on the 12th September, the completely renovated "Bethel" was inaugurated, 300 patients were clamouring for admittance. The original building had been surrounded with about 30 acres of land. In 25 years, the congregation owned more than 2,000. The individuality of the dwelling-houses acquired was altered as little as possible, the object of the authorities being to leave them all their *home* characteristics.

As is usual in Westphalia, these houses lie among gardens and meadows, shrubberies, fields and forest— independent, and suited to the seclusion of family life. To give the unfortunate patients some of the privileges of home and home-industry is one of the first endeavours of the organiser.

The families are separated according to sex and age, a "House-Mother" (Deaconess) superintending each female division, a "House-Father" (Deacon) ordering each male family.

The homes of the epileptics scattered through the pleasant valleys of the Teutoburger Wald have received the name of "Landscape of Peace."

Even where want of space made it necessary to enlarge the acquired houses, the system of "families" was rigidly adhered to. Ten or twelve

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)