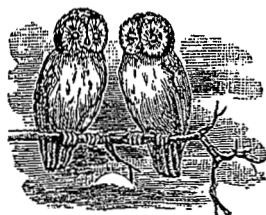
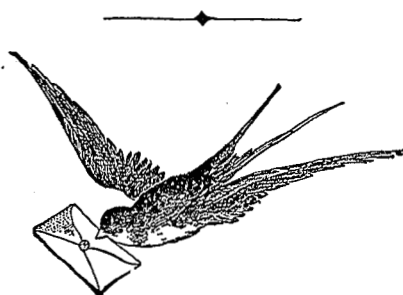


The Matrons' Council.



MADAM,—Will you permit an old and appreciative reader of your journal, and one who takes much interest in the progress of the Nursing profession, to say one or two words on the subject of the new Society, through the medium of your widely read columns. It appears to me that the Matrons of our English Hospitals have a great opportunity offered to them in the formation of the Matrons' Council. They have hitherto done most kindly and excellent work in their several spheres, and I and others have been only too pleased to be able, publicly and privately, to express our indebtedness to them for the good which they have brought to all concerned, in raising the tone and usefulness of Nurses. But most of them have hitherto worked in their own circle and for the benefit of their own Hospitals and Nurses alone, and good though the results have been for the individuals, observe how bad the isolated action has been for their profession. It is just about thirty years ago since a system of training Nurses was instituted, and yet up to the present moment no complete concordance has been arrived at as to what that training should be, nor even as to how long that training should last. This is a question far wider than any which usually falls to any one Matron's duty to determine, and yet it is one which is important above all things to every Matron, because upon its settlement must depend to a very large extent her own educational work. The formation of a Matrons' Council, therefore, appears to unbiassed outsiders to be fraught with the greatest possibilities of the settlement of this important matter. These ladies, individually, have done so great a work, that it is certain that if they were to devote their united wisdom to this matter, a just and wise decision would soon be reached. I specially mention the consideration of this question because upon it seems to depend nearly every other matter relating to the training of Nurses. It is quite probable—it is perhaps almost certain—that some amount of opposition may be made to the work of your new Society. But with such a great question before it—setting aside all the other benefits which co-operation amongst Matrons may bring to the sick and suffering in this country—I trust that such opposition will only be regarded in the light of a friendly stimulus to renewed exertions, while it may suffice, perhaps, to point out mistakes which even ladies, owing solely to their being human,

sometimes make, and which, if not corrected, might mar their work. Those who, like myself, have received the greatest help from trained Nurses, earnestly watch the movement which you and others are so wisely guiding, and wish it God speed. I enclose my card, but permit me to sign myself,
F. R. C. S.



Our Foreign Letter.

A NURSING COLONY.

(Continued from page 66.)

The question as to respective merits of male and female Nurses has generally been decided to the advantage of the latter. In Bielefeld the balance is said to be fairly equal. "Brothers" (Nursing Deacons) did not exist here until the year 1872. At this time the want of efficient Nurses—especially *male* Nurses—was very painfully felt. And then, just when he was most wanted, Dietrich Baumhöfener volunteered for the service. He seems to have been a wonderful youth, a being whose life impresses one with the truth of George Eliot's saying: "Excellence encourages one about life generally; it shows the spiritual wealth of the world."

Dietrich Baumhöfener had at first offered himself as a missionary. He had been refused on account of his youth—he was nearer boyhood than manhood. Straightway (to test his own earnestness of purpose) he placed himself at the service of the epileptics at Bielefeld, and here he devoted himself for years to the trying tasks of fitting himself to be their Nurse and comforter, of gaining recruits for the same cause, and of studying for the profession he still kept in sight—that of missionary to the heathen. He seems to have had more than the ordinary Teuton's privilege of being a tremendous worker. After attending to his more obvious duties all day, he would study half the night. "You might look up at his window," say those who knew him, "and see the light there glimmering through the darkness, long after the new day had virtually begun. Sometimes the cool grey of morning set in before that light was extinguished."

Among other things Dietrich was master-baker. It

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