

WE are informed that great interest is being evinced in the forthcoming meeting on the 13th, in the Board Room of St. Bartholomew's Hospital—so kindly put at the disposal of Miss ISLA STEWART by the Committee of the institution—for the purpose of forming a Matrons' Council. Her Royal Highness Princess CHRISTIAN has, of course, been the first to express her gracious interest, as she does in everything for the good of Nurses, in the suggestion that Matrons shall meet together, and, in unofficial debate, exchange views and suggestions concerning the organisation of nursing matters. Several sessions will doubtless come and go before any definite scheme for uniformity of education can be evolved which will meet with universal approbation; but nothing will bring this desirable end within the range of practical nursing politics so soon as free discussion and suggestion amongst those who have the welfare of their profession at heart. And an International Nursing Congress, held under the presidency of Her Royal Highness, would without doubt bring such questions before the notice of the world at large.

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WE printed on June the 9th a most interesting letter, prompted by an admirable sense of public duty, from Miss HENRIETTA KENEALY, *re* the appointment of members to seats on the General Council of the R.B.N.A. We believe we are right in surmising that great numbers of members do not even trouble themselves to return the voting papers, signed, to the office, much less suggest should they know of any reason that a member is not suitable for the honour of election to the governing body of the Association. We agree with Miss KENEALY that each member should conscientiously consider the voting paper, and permit only names to remain there whose interest and devotion to the Association is assured, and who will do all in their power to maintain its honour and success.

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IN the new edition of Quain's Dictionary of Medicine, Miss NIGHTINGALE has revised her Paper on the Training of Nurses; all she says will of course carry the weight it deserves. The article is divided into the following sections: 1. What makes a good training school for Nurses. 2. Course for all Probationers. 3. Training to Train. 4. Current Tests, Current Records of Progress and Examinations. 5. Staff and Training School. We quote the General Consideration of Training with which the article concludes, in full:—

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"A year's training is simply teaching the Nurse her A. B. C.—teaching her how to go on learning for herself, learning to understand

her doctor's orders and to read her own experience, for mere experience may only teach the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. A Nurse without training is like a man who has never learnt his alphabet, who has learnt experience only from his own blunders. Blunders in executing physician's or surgeon's orders upon the living body are hazardous things and may kill the patient. Training is to enable the Nurse to see what she sees—facts, and to do what she is told; to obey orders, not only by rule of thumb, but by having a rule of thought or observation to guide her. Otherwise she finds out her own mistakes by experience, acquired out of death, rather than life, or does not find them out at all.

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Medicine, surgery, pathology, and, above all, hygiene, have made immense strides, partly in consequence of improved tools, improved instruments of observation. Nursing, their agent, has to be trained up to them. A good Nurse of twenty years ago had not to do the twentieth part of what she is required by her physician or surgeon to do now; and so after the year's training, she must be still training under instruction in her first, and even second year's, hospital service. Indeed, every five or ten years a Nurse after leaving the Hospital, really requires a second training nowadays. Nursing needs its instruments nearly as much as surgery, and yet more than medicine. The physician prescribes for supplying the vital force—but the Nurse supplies it. Training is to teach the Nurse how God makes health and how He makes disease. Training is to teach a Nurse to know her business; that is, to observe exactly, to understand, to know exactly, to do, to tell exactly, in such stupendous issues as life and death, health and disease. Training is to enable the Nurse to act for the best in carrying out her orders, not as a machine but as a Nurse; not like Cornelius Agrippa's broomstick which went on carrying water, but like an intelligent and responsible being. Training has to make her, not servile, but loyal to medical orders and authorities. True loyalty to orders cannot be without the independent sense or energy of responsibility which alone secures real trustworthiness. Training makes the difference in a Nurse, that is made in a student by making him prepare specimens for himself instead of merely looking at prepared specimens. Training is to teach the Nurse how to handle the agencies within our control which restore health and life, in strict obedience to the physician's or surgeon's power and knowledge—how to keep the health-mechanism prescribed to her in gear. Training must show her how the effects on life of nursing may be calculated with nice precision—such care or carelessness, such a sick rate, such a duration of case, such a death-rate.

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