

Newcastle Nursing Home.

At the Annual Meeting in connection with the Newcastle Nursing Home and Training School a very satisfactory account was given of the progressive measures taken by the Committee, and of the admirable management of the much-appreciated Matron, Miss Emery. With regard to the Nurses it was stated that the Committee had been pleased to be able to divide among them £305 as bonus money. Fourteen of the Nurses had received the medal given by the Home as a reward for six years' good conduct, and some of the recipients had been on the staff for upwards of ten years. The Committee were desirous of accumulating money to enable them to form a fund for the relief of their Nurses when from illness or other causes they were unable to work, and for this purpose donations or presents were most gratefully accepted. At the same time they would inform the public that they were now in a position to be quite independent of subscriptions. The present staff consists of seventy Nurses and ten Probationers, and in the last year they had nursed 618 cases.

Legislation for Nurses.

By a recent order of the New York State Commissioners of Lunacy, all the employees of State Hospitals have had to pass an examination in order to entitle them to hold their positions. The examination consists of twenty questions, and the examinations are conducted at State headquarters, and not in the Institutions where the Nurses are trained. This will insure no favouritism. Those who pass will be called Nurses, while those who do not pass will be styled attendants. The dining room help will be called attendants. To the uninitiated it may be as well to explain that the dining room attendants' duties are merely to look after the meals and dining room proper; they have nothing to do with the care of the patients. An adjustment in wages will also be made; this is a step in the right direction, as heretofore the pay has not been equivalent to the responsibility incurred. Those in charge of convalescent wards have been getting the same pay as those who had the more troublesome wards.

This examination by the State is a significant and progressive step, tending in the direction of a Board of Education for Nurses, and has originated, as do so many valuable systems, in the United States. There does not appear to be any reason why State Commissioners should not be appointed to regulate the internal arrangements of Government Hospitals, as they do of Government Asylums.

Kitson v. Playfair.

It is to be hoped that the recent scandal case, Kitson v. Playfair, will remind Nurses of the sacredness of all matters which come to their knowledge while in the exercise of their professional duties. It would be intolerable to a patient were it to be considered legal or honourable for doctors and Nurses to disclose to *anyone*, under any circumstances, the knowledge of those intimate details which the medical man and the Nurse so often necessarily acquire. Undoubtedly, many Nurses indulge in a great deal of "gossip"—which it appears to them quite harmless to repeat, but which, from the point of view of the patient, is most objectionable. Nurses should reflect on the developments of the late case, and should be wary lest "gossip" may develop into slander. Nurses and doctors both should adopt the same honourable conduct as to the secrets of the sick room which the Roman Catholic Church enjoins its priests to exercise as to the "secrets of the confessional."

The National Association for Nurses and its Legal Organisation.*

By Miss L. L. Dock.

(Continued from page 249.)

THE composition of our forces will need very careful consideration. There are some among you whose opinions are always entitled to respect, who hold the view that a Nurses' organisation should include members of Training School boards, in order to carry any weight or exert any influence. The arguments used in support of this proposition are as follows, viz., that most of the future progress of nursing, as well as to a great extent the standing of the Nurse in the eyes of the public, depends upon the policy that obtains in Training Schools; that a large part of the work of an association will be toward improvements and advances in Training School methods; that the Superintendents of Schools being only salaried officers, have no final authority, and must often, in fact, yield their convictions to the decisions of those in control; that under such circumstances it is idle for Nurses to meet and agree upon what they believe to be best for their work's interests, since they have no power to carry out their ideas, and that the only way to organise a practical, common-sense and efficient society, is

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