

is a matter on which the London School of Medicine for Women is heartily to be congratulated that it has so impressed upon this generation the good work done by women in the medical profession, that on Monday next the new Pfeiffer Wing, in connection with the School, is to be opened by the Princess of Wales, who will be accompanied by the Prince of Wales. Medical Women in Great Britain have passed through the "rotten egg" stage, they have made for themselves an honourable place in the medical profession, and the fact that their good work has, in spite of enormous opposition, been so marked as to receive the approval of royalty, is a triumph which medical women undoubtedly well deserve.

PENSIONS FOR ARMY NURSING SISTERS.

CAPTAIN NORTON recently raised the question of the pensions of Army Nursing Sisters in the House of Commons, by asking the Under Secretary of State for War, whether, seeing that an Army Nursing Sister could retire at the age of sixty after from thirty to thirty-five years' service with a pension of £38 10s. a year, whereas an Army Schoolmistress could retire at the age of fifty after twenty-one years' service with a pension of £45 10s. a year, he would consider the advisability of improving the conditions of retirement of Army Nursing Sisters.

Mr. Brodrick said that the facts of the case were not as stated in the question. An Army Nursing Sister would receive, after thirty years' service, £35 a year, and if reported as having given special devotion to her duties, might receive a higher pension up to a maximum of £50. An Army Schoolmistress would receive after twenty-one years' service, £31 19s. 2d., and after thirty years service, £45 13s. a year. The Secretary of State for War saw no reason to make any change in these conditions.

We are of opinion that the pension of Army Sisters, who have spent all their working days in the Service, should be one which will enable them to obtain the necessaries of life when they are past work, and this they certainly cannot do on less than 30/- a week. We know that many of the Army Sisters feel strongly on the subject of the inadequacy of their retiring pensions, as they have spoken to us on the subject. We hope, therefore, that the Secretary of State for War will ultimately be able to see a reason for making the pensions of the Sisters bear some faint resemblance to those which they would obtain if they happened to be members of the other sex.

Medical Matters.

LEAD POISONING.



A GREAT deal has been lately written, in the daily press, concerning this subject. Recent revelations in the Potteries have shown that, to a large extent, the dangers connected with glazing still exist. It was thought that the precautions which had been taken, not only in lead works, but also in all the other occupations in which the metal plays an important part, had resulted in practically preventing the cases of lead-poisoning which were formerly so frequent. But it now appears that preparations of lead are used in some factories and sometimes without the knowledge of the *employés* and perhaps even of the employers. The most common method of poisoning, and therefore the one to which precautions are most carefully directed, consists of the metal being taken into the mouth with the food owing to carelessness in cleaning the hands before meals, on the part of the worker; and care in this particular has undoubtedly prevented immense suffering. The best known symptom of this poisoning is that known under the term of "lead colic"—the abdominal pains being of the most violent and spasmodic character. These attacks are probably largely due to the extreme constipation, which is the first consequence of the affection; the metal possessing a paralysing influence upon the nervous system, and therefore upon the contractile power of the intestines. The attack of colic is sometimes so violent and prolonged that the patient's life may be in danger, although, as a general rule, medical treatment is obtained soon enough to prevent any fatal result. There is, however, a constant liability to recurrence of the attacks whilst the poison remains in the system; and the tissues are often so impregnated with the metal that it is a matter often of weeks before the patient can be regarded as cured. The typical sign of the disease is the blue line along the margin of the gums which is never absent in well-developed cases, while the gradual fading of this is the best proof that the poison is being eliminated. The connection between lead and gout is well known and interesting. Workers in lead factories in former days suffered from extreme and persistent attacks of gout; the explanation of this being that the presence

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)