

In the next place, the efforts made by such schemes as the "Hospital Stamps" and the "Children's Album" have not only failed to assist the fund materially, but they have also roused a feeling of considerable astonishment that the Prince of Wales should have been advised to accord his sanction to such proposals. The League of Mercy, we greatly fear, will prove to be equally unworkable and unsuccessful. The scheme may be briefly described as follows:—One hundred Presidents are each to appoint thirty Vice-Presidents—that is to say, 3,000 in all. Each Vice-President is to select twenty members of the League—which would therefore consist of 60,000 members. Those who have taken any part in the working of a large Society will realize the enormous amount of labour and the great expense which will be involved in maintaining such an organization as this; and we are, therefore, astonished to observe that the scheme is described as "cheap." It could only be worked economically if each President would himself bear the whole cost of communicating with, and maintaining the enthusiasm of, the 600 members under his charge; but when the social position and manifold duties of the gentlemen who have accepted what they doubtless consider to be the purely nominal office of President is considered, it is obvious that such an amount of detail could not be reasonably expected from any one of them.

But the whole success of the movement depends on the final step; for each one of the 60,000 members is expected to find "twenty subscribers of one shilling each and upwards" that is to say, the league is expected to have 1,200,000 subscribers. If children under five years of age are excluded, this means that one out of every three men, women, and children, in the County of London is expected to be, and to ensure its success must become, a subscriber to the League of Mercy. Without going into figures which would demonstrate their fallacy, we have little hesitation in regarding these results as absolutely impossible of fulfilment. It must be also remembered that the mere fact of such wholesale efforts to obtain subscriptions, year after year, from all classes, for the Metropolitan Hospitals must inevitably have the very effect which it is the avowed object of the Fund to prevent. It would undoubtedly arouse a very general feeling of irritation and unrest which would result in a movement for converting Hospitals into Rate or State-aided Institutions.

### Annotations.

#### THE ADMINISTRATION OF POISONS.

THE sad death of Dr. Boyd from having taken by mistake a dose of carbolic acid instead of a sleeping draught, draws attention once more to the necessity for dispensing poisons in distinctive bottles, a rule which cannot be too rigorously insisted on. We are glad to observe that the Pharmaceutical Society has recently framed a new regulation, which has been approved by the Privy Council, directing chemists to use special bottles for the sale of poisons, and it is a matter for surprise that such a rule has not been enforced long ago. The simple precaution of dispensing poisons in triangular bottles, would probably have saved many lives, Dr. Boyd's amongst the number, but nurses, who understand the extreme care necessary in the administration of medicines, will know how very easy it is for an unprofessional person to make a mistake when draughts and poisons are dispensed in similar bottles. Every accident of this sort is a fresh lesson to nurses to exercise the greatest care in the administration of medicines, and an occasion for the re-iteration of the principle that no medicine should ever be given without the label on the bottle having first been read. We may add, though this is rather beside the subject, that no nurse who values the appearance of her bottles, will ever pour out a draught on the side of the bottle to which the label is affixed. Neither should a nurse ever be allowed to undertake the responsibility of giving medicines until she is well acquainted with the signs used in their prescription, or she may give an ounce for a drachm with fatal result, or administer a drachm, for one drop, of croton oil. Instruction in the properties and effects of drugs, the usual doses and the antidotes to be used in case of poisoning should form part of the educational curriculum of all nurses.

#### THE TRAINING OF NURSES.

THE very wise decision of the Local Government Board that all nurses in workhouse infirmaries, whose salaries are paid in part by the Board, should have had at least two years hospital training, elicited some remarkable expressions of opinion from the Londonderry Board of Guardians. Dr. Browne, medical officer of the house, according to the local press, said that "when a nurse was at private nursing, she was under the supervision of a doctor, and the training she received was just as good as if she was in the hospital."

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