

American Nursing World.

American nurses are already, with admirable forethought, making arrangements to celebrate the new century by holding a Congress on Nursing at Buffalo, N.Y., in 1901. It is to coincide with the Pan-American Exposition, and a large and, we may be sure, splendid Nursing Exhibition is to be held. Already, a year in advance, invitations to take part in this interesting occasion have been accepted by the National Associated Alumnae, the Society of Superintendents of Training Schools, and many other nursing societies. The Nurses' Association of Buffalo, N.Y., are taking the initiative in the movement, of which Miss Damer is the President.

It is whispered that a new nursing journal, in which the leaders of American nursing organization are interested, will shortly make its appearance in the States. This is all to the good—the more the merrier—as those working earnestly for any cause in which women are interested must make themselves heard, and in this noisy and rapid age, articulation must be very distinct.

One of the most interesting branches of nursing work in New York is the Nurses' Settlement, of which Miss L. L. Dock gave us such a charming account in this journal some time ago, and it is satisfactory to note that the head of this delightful place, Miss Wald, who is a trained nurse, had the honour of being appointed one of the two women jurors to award prizes to the best models of the Tenement House Exhibition lately opened in New York City. Miss Lincoln, of Boston, of whom Professor Geddes said that she knew more about architecture and buildings than any woman in the States, was her coadjutor, together with many men of eminence. The Settlement nurses were naturally gratified at this compliment to Miss Wald's practical knowledge, and also that in her official position she took part in the reception of the Governor Roosevelt at the opening ceremony.

In a chatty letter from an American correspondent, we gather many interesting facts, notably that, at the Quarterly Meeting of the Johns Hopkins Alumnae Association, it was unanimously decided to assist one member of the Association desiring to take the course in Hospital Economics at Teachers' College, Columbia University. The Association affords this privilege for one year, to be renewed annually should student and Association be assured "of its value in the advancement of the interests of the profession of nursing." This is a really practical result of combination.

We are glad to learn that the Superintendents Society is in communication with Mrs. May Wright Sewall, so as to get a clear idea of the organization of the National Council of Women, and it is proposed to fully discuss the matter of national and international co-operation at the forthcoming annual meeting of the American Matrons.

A census is also being prepared of the terms of training in American Nursing Schools, and it is most satisfactory to note that, since 1894, 55 schools have adopted the 3 years' course, 5 have 2½ years, 7 have the non-pay system, and 5 the 8-hour working day—evidence, we think, of very great professional progress.

In discussing the all-absorbing question of legislation for trained nurses, our correspondent aptly describes those who are opposing an efficient system of registration as the "chronic kickers" (we know the genus well), and thinks that each State will have to get its own laws. New York has a unique position, because the laws of the State put the whole conduct of the examination and certification for the learned, practical professions under the University of New York. The Regents of the University appoint an examining Board from a list of candidates presented to them by the organization in question—medical, legal, etc.

Thus, the Americans hope to have a Board composed partly at least of trained nurses, medical men being chosen to conduct examinations in theoretical subjects. Registration can only follow the bestowal of the Regent's certificate, and illegal practice may be punished by fine. Where the benefit of such legislation would be apparent would be in stimulating the non-progressive schools and discouraging the bad ones.

The reason for not having sooner tackled this great reform in the States, has been that the Matrons have not urged legislation until they could base their laws on a reasonably high standard. In America, laws amount to nothing unless there is a certain amount of public and educated opinion behind them. Laws calculated to force public opinion are only disregarded, as our correspondent remarks:—"You know, we are not an obedient and docile set of people!" For which we Europeans may be devoutly thankful.

Owing to the enlightened methods of education in the United States, and the elasticity of the laws, legislation is effected, whilst we, in this country, are battling with the prejudices of ages.

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