

The Registered Nurses' Society.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee, which was held at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, on Tuesday, 20th ult., Mrs. Bedford Fenwick



in the chair, several items of interest to the members were discussed. The Hon. Superintendent reported that Sister Julia Hurlston, one of the earliest members, had been invited to represent the Society on the Sub-Committee of the Matrons' Council, formed to consider the question of "ways and means" for Delegates to the International Gathering of Nurses, to be held at Buffalo, U.S.A., in September, 1901. Sister Hurlston was already in communication with her colleagues on the R.N.S., and the suggestion was that each member should be invited to contribute 10s.—5s. this year and 5s. next,—that a small committee, consisting of the six nurse members now on the Executive Committee—Sisters Tudor, Fawkes, Flannagan, Lidyard, Hewitt and Tillott, together with Sister Hurlston, should carry out the details of the arrangement. Each subscriber had been invited to nominate the member (exclusive of the Hon. Superintendent) she considered most fitted to represent the Society at Buffalo. When these names had been sent in they would be printed and sent round for the vote of all subscribing members, and the one who received the most votes would thus be elected to officially represent the Registered Nurses' Society at the New Century Celebrations. This had been considered the most fair and open way of making a selection. Between £50 and £60 would be required for the expenses of a Delegate.

A REGISTERED NURSES' LEAGUE.

The Hon. Superintendent said that she hoped to take steps at an early date to form The Registered Nurses' League, so that when the Constitution of the National League of Certificated Nurses had been finally approved, the Society would be in a position to apply for affiliation and representation on its Grand Council, and thus come into touch with other nurses, which, she felt sure, would be of professional and social benefit to the members.

NEW MEMBERS.

Sisters Barclay and Wilson were elected to membership of the R.N.S., and thirteen applications were considered, and the candidates accepted on the usual term of probation.

SOPHIA E. CARTWRIGHT, *Secretary.*

Nursing Ethics.

THE first object of the National League of Certificated Nurses, as defined by the Matrons' Council is—

(1) To establish and maintain a Code of Ethics.

During the discussion of this point in Council, there was just the suspicion of a smile on some faces—maybe some of those present feared that nurses would not appreciate, much less adopt and live up to, a Code of anything—or, perhaps, they thought that the nurse's ideal was so high that no Code could elevate her professional conduct.

I had "me doots."

Anyway, I should hope when such a Code is defined that its first law will embody the principle that *silence is a sacred duty* on the part of a nurse in all that relates to the patient, apart from her official reports to the medical officer in charge. The necessity for such a law was brought forcibly home to me on Monday when, upon opening my morning paper, I found therein an article headed in large type, "The Fatal Illness of Prince Christian Victor: Letters from the Hospital Nurses"!

Extracts followed from letters written by Sister Sharp, of the Army Nursing Reserve, dated from the Imperial Branch Yeomanry Hospital at Pretoria, to Miss Easton, Matron of the Berkshire Hospital, Reading, to the staff of which hospital Sister Sharp is attached (and of which Her Majesty the Queen is patroness), describing in much detail her work and experience among the sick and wounded, and more especially referring to the last illness of Major Prince Christian Victor, of Schleswig-Holstein.

The tone of these letters is distinctly distasteful; they are evidently written by a young person somewhat *tête montée* with "the honour of attending him," or, as she reiterates, "I feel very much honoured, although when I am with him I almost forget who he is"!

But this servility is not, in my opinion, the most objectionable feature of these letters; it is the total lack of professional feeling and the consequent absence of professional reticence, which is so offensive. This poor young Prince was a patient, and with the sick of every class—be he prince or peasant—it is the first duty of a trained nurse to keep silence concerning his affairs. All reference to the symptoms and treatment of a patient is, without doubt, a breach of professional etiquette, and the present lack of appreciation upon the part of many nurses of their sacred duty in this respect, calls for the definition of a Code of Ethics by which every

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