

Dr. Weir Mitchell urges, therefore, that nurses should pay for their training; but in order to assist those who have no money, that a certain number of free scholarships should be given by all hospitals, and these should be awarded to women who could pass a more rigid competitive test on entering than the ordinary preliminary examination, thus assimilating the conditions to those which govern schools of medicine. These scholarships, however, should not be permanently awarded until after a period of probation had added to the test of secular education that of moral and physical qualifications, and should be subject to loss in case of obvious unfitness for ward duty.

Then as to the education to be pre-exacted, Dr. Weir Mitchell suggests a diploma from a High School or College, or its equivalent. When the nurse begins her professional education he thinks that for the first six months she should do no nursing, but should be taught ward housekeeping and what is meant by cleanliness in ward, kitchen, and laundry; cooking, and what it does for foods. Lessons in hygiene and instruction in bandaging should be given, and the nurse should also learn chamber exercises, massage, thermometry, &c.

The system of student-nurses paying for the instruction they receive would, Dr. Mitchell thinks, help to prevent the nursing profession being loaded with ill-bred, half-trained persons who are only by degrees tried and rejected by worried physicians. It would also correct other ills. After pointing out that the primary preparative course of study is in active use in the Johns Hopkins Hospital and in some London hospitals, Dr. Mitchell proceeds to advocate the establishment of central preliminary schools, "Permit me," he says, "here again to point out that you should do as physicians do. A year is given by us to preparation for the intelligent use of the clinical instruction which is to follow. At one time we mixed it all in bewildering confusion."

He then goes on to show that there is a better way than the establishment of preliminary training-schools in connection with the different hospitals, and that two distinguished nurse directresses have called his attention to the possibility of saving time, money, and much disappointment by having one central training school to teach all the preliminary knowledge which ought to precede hard work. Dr. Weir Mitchell then advocates that nurses who have passed through the course of training in the general hospitals should broaden their training by adding qualifications in special subjects. He then deals with post-graduate study, concerning which he says:—"At the Presbyterian Hospital their own graduates may return for post-graduate study. To my surprise, none ever do so, and yet you call yours a profession. We (the medical profession) do not deal so with education. We are constantly return-

ing to the head springs of instruction for experience and novelties."

After dealing with the defects which contribute to unpopularity in the private nurse, despite the fact of technical perfection, the lecturer says:—"I have often wanted to unite the entire self-devotion of the Sisterhoods with the perfect training of the secular nurse. . . . I have seen and admired the union of perfect training and high sense of religious duty combined in the lay nurse; but it is rare, very rare, in your profession and in mine.

"Some nurse with the head, some with the heart, some with both head and heart. Nursing knowledge can be got; but nursing—the highest nursing—is more a question of character than of acquirements. Really, believe me, it is a question of goodness, of that side of character which makes for the righteous life, sweet temper, unselfishness, truth, that honesty which is eager to do more than merely earn wages."

### For Meritorious Service.

General Chaffee, Commanding the General Division of the American Army in the Philippines, has made the following recommendation in regard to Miss Alice S. Kemmer, an Army nurse, who, never having had small-pox, volunteered to undertake the care of two very severe cases of the disease, and saved these lives by her devotion:—"That the specially meritorious services of this nurse be fittingly recognised to the Army in general orders, as is the custom for gallant and commendable acts on the part of soldiers."

### The Australian Nurses' Register.

The Register of Members of the Australasian Trained Nurses Association, of which Miss McGahey, Matron of Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, and Hon. Vice-President of the International Council for Federated Australia is Hon. Secretary, is of much interest. It shows first that nurses in Australia have found, as we have found in this country, the need of a publication in which their names and their professional careers can be detailed. Every profession, the Church, the Army, the Navy, the legal profession, and the medical profession has found the need either of a voluntary or legal list of its members, and, until they have their registers issued under State authority the trained nurses in all countries where organised nursing exists, are well advised to publish voluntary lists.

The Register of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association contains the names of 327 registered members. This is an excellent beginning, and we have no doubt that as well-trained nurses in Australia increasingly recognise the professional value of registration that many new names will be added.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)