

### Annotations.

#### THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NURSES.

The Transactions of the International Congress of Nurses held at Buffalo last year, which are now obtainable from Miss Banfield, Polyclinic Hospital, Philadelphia, price five shillings, exclusive of postage, form a most valuable work of reference which should be in every nurses' library. It gives a complete picture of the present condition of nursing, and contains articles by well-known nurses in all parts of the world. Every nurse who takes an interest in the history of her profession should possess herself of this volume.

#### A MUNIFICENT GIFT.

It is announced that Mr. Nowrojee Manockjee Wadia, a well-known Parsee in Bombay, proposes to place in the hands of a trust nearly a million pounds for charitable purposes. The income derived from this sum is to be devoted to giving relief in any country to persons deprived of their means of subsistence by sudden calamities. The gift is a most generous one, and the object well conceived.

#### INSURANCE AGAINST OPERATIONS.

In the voluminous correspondence now proceeding on the subject of "well-to-do patients in hospitals," we notice a practical suggestion (which has, indeed, been made on various occasions in the columns of this journal), namely, that the public should insure against operations. The supporter of this says: "We insure our lives, we insure ourselves against accidents; why not against operations? Will not the insurance companies take this matter in hand? For a certain annual payment a subscriber might be entitled to (1) a sum down, or (2) free admittance to a nursing home and a free operation." The expense of illness, more especially of illness including an operation, is now so great that we see no possibility of effective provision for it on the part of people of moderate incomes except by some such scheme. The cost per week of two trained nurses alone—exclusive of medical attendance, the increased household expenses, and the change of air always desirable in the convalescent stage—would absorb the whole income of many professional and middle-class persons, who consequently have far less efficient care in illness than is available for the working classes,

#### THE USES OF ALCOHOL.

The progress of scientific opinion indubitably shows that the utility of alcohol in medicine, and in general life as well, is becoming more and more circumscribed. At an interview, after his second attempt to swim the Channel, Mr. Holbein is reported to have said that he did not believe that alcoholic stimulants would have been of any advantage to him in the last hour or two of his swim. He stated that he took expert medical advice some years ago on this question, and was strongly urged against the use of stimulants for persons engaged in athletics; and his own experience had proved this to be the case. Nearly every athlete of note will probably agree with the swimmer in this opinion. It is on mistaken grounds entirely that alcohol has been described as a food. It is nothing more or less than a stimulant which may urge the flagging energies to redoubled effort at the expense of greater fatigue when its effect has passed away. In the treatment of disease this is, of course, now generally recognised, and alcohol is chiefly prescribed as a means of either stimulating the heart when it is possible that otherwise syncope might occur, or of stimulating the digestive functions, especially in cases of convalescence or nerve exhaustion.

#### A RISK IN RAW VEGETABLES.

The Board of Health in New York, which city is at present suffering from an outbreak of enteric fever which is fortunately mild in character, has issued the following advice to the public:—"Do not eat raw and unclean vegetables; do not buy cheap dairy products; sterilise the milk." This advice has been given on the assumption, founded on bacteriological study, that the chief source of evil in the origin of typhoid is not in the water, or even in the milk supply, but is conveyed from the soil through the eating of raw vegetables such as lettuce, tomatoes, and onions. It is said that in the quarters of New York where the disease is most prevalent the water and milk were proved to be above suspicion, but that persons who had eaten vegetables which came from a part of the country which had been partly submerged by heavy rain were attacked, and it is supposed that contamination was spread from the barnyards where no sanitary precautions are taken. It is easy to understand that uncooked vegetables, grown in contaminated soil, may convey the germs of disease to persons who consume them.

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