

been treated by the external application of Goulard water, this must be at once discontinued; otherwise the lead salts may be deposited as carbonate of lead in rough, gritty scales on the surface of the ulcer, forming a dense and permanent opacity. If a deep ulcer forms and perforation threatens, the treatment will be directed toward preventing inclusion of the iris in the resulting scar.

During the healing, a supporting bandage may be applied, if the conjunctival discharge has ceased, and by its means the weak scar tissue may be aided against the intra-ocular tension; the resulting curvature of the cornea may be little altered. The support, however, must be given judiciously, and the pads adjusted carefully to fit the orbit and exercise equal pressure over all the weakened area. A pad of the usual pattern is of more harm than good, inasmuch as it throws pressure into the centre of the cornea and leaves the margin almost untouched.

In simple conjunctivitis, as in infectious, the nurse must remember that anything that induces retention of the discharges is maleficent. For this reason no bandage or occlusive dressing of any kind is desirable; if there be spasm of the orbicularis, this should be relieved in any way possible, as has been already described.

In children, the ocular disease is often due to auto-infection from some patch of impetigo or eczema, and this must be sought for and tended. Often the origin of the whole may be found in slight ulceration of the nostrils. It is most important that treatment should be continued until the centre of infection has been cured.

It is greatly to be hoped that the subject of *ophthalmia neonatorum* will receive the attention of the Legislature when the education and registration of midwives is seriously taken in hand; it is at present little short of a national disgrace that no steps should have been made by the State effectually to prevent the ravages of the disease.

(To be continued).

International Council of Nurses.

Miss L. L. Dock, hon. secretary, has just issued a list of officers, and an abstract of the minutes of the meeting of the International Council, held at Buffalo, in which she states:—"The work that is before the Council is to stimulate the organisation of nurses of all lands into national bodies, which may unite by sending their representatives to meet and confer together. America is ready, having her 'American Federation of Nurses,' formed and willing to become a branch of an International Council. Australia is almost ready, with but a step to take. England is preparing, and it is hoped that the next meeting, which will be held in Berlin in 1904, will show an interest among the nurses of other countries."

Unite.

By MISS ISLA STEWART.

President, Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland.

Of all the professions open to women there is none that presents so many opportunities for the exercise of what may be called the old-fashioned virtues as that of nursing. The care of the sick is essentially a woman's work and in it very few men can hope to emulate them. The average woman can, in right of her womanhood, attend the sick better than an average man. No doubt some men have a natural tendency to the gentler arts, and can be made into tolerable nurses, but they are rare. The qualities which go to make up a good nurse are quite feminine: gentleness, patience, attention to detail, unselfishness and deep sympathy; these, though not lacking in men, are more fully developed in women, and among women they are more prominent in the better educated. These are, I think, the foundation without which no amount of training can produce the really good nurse. Nursing, then, is a profession belonging to women as the profession of a soldier belongs entirely to men.

For centuries women have lived a guarded life, the large majority remaining under the protection of, and in obedience to, their parents until they passed into the protection of their husbands, to whom they yielded much the same obedience; if left widows they were placed under the guardianship of trustees, and so never during their lives did they think or act for themselves. If unmarried, they either spent their lives at home, living under authority or passed into other families as governesses, and in either case faded gently on to the stage of old maidenhood, having spent as uninteresting and uneventful a life as was possible. There were, of course, brilliant exceptions, but their very brilliancy shows that they were striking exceptions to a very general rule. During the last century, increased means of travel and a wider education have somewhat altered this, but women are still, and will be for many generations, what those generations of a modified seclusion have made them. It is well-nigh impossible for many women to fight the battle of life single-handed, and for this there are many reasons, of which perhaps the most important is their physical health. The health of a woman is never very robust, and she is therefore not capable, except at the cost of too much vital force, of standing a long-continued strain. The wear and tear of life where everything has to be earned, and all difficult questions, either ethical or moral, have to be decided unaided, upsets their fine nervous balance, and often leaves them a mere mass of irritable nerves. As another consequence of the semi-secluded life, women never used their reasoning powers, so much so, indeed, that they are

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