

IV. Should be given power to suspend a Superintendent Nurse.

V. Should be urged to separate sick wards from the main building of the workhouse.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

I. That the basis of the grant to Guardians under the Local Government Board Act of 1885 should be revised so as to enable the State to contribute more directly to the cost of the Poor Law Nursing Service.

II. That the grant, so far as nurses are concerned, should be paid only in respect of nurses whose qualifications and appointments are in accordance with the Local Government Board's requirements.

News of Miss Brennan.

We learn that Miss Agnes S. Brennan, for so many years Lady Superintendent of the Bellevue Hospital, New York, and who holds the position of Councillor in the International Council of Nurses, is at present engaged in organising a beautiful new hospital at Richmond, U.S.A., where everything, including the building itself, is on a most lavish scale. Miss Brennan will eventually make her headquarters in New York, where she has taken an apartment.

Legal Matters.

A NURSE'S GUILT.

The Sunday papers deal with a very disreputable case under the high-sounding title of—

A NURSE'S GUILT.

Mr. Alfred R. Lamport, a gentleman said to be in poor circumstances, sought to obtain a divorce because of the adultery of his wife, Florence Lamport, with Mr. P. D. R. Eppes. Neither respondent nor co-respondent appeared to defend the case.

Petitioner stated that he married his wife in 1896. There were two children, but one died soon after birth. For a time they lived at Littlehampton, but ultimately they came to Primrose Mansions. To relieve the financial situation his wife voluntarily went out nursing. By-and-by, however, he discovered that she had been staying with co-respondent at an hotel in Gower Street.

Evidence as to adultery having been heard, his Lordship granted a decree nisi, with custody of the child.

There was absolutely no evidence to prove that this woman was a "nurse," but until trained nurses are sufficiently inspired by an honourable respect for their work to demand Registration by the State, they must not complain of the constant smirching of their profession in the courts of law. The discredit they thus suffer is the result of their own apathetic lack of courage.

The Constitutions of the Nurses' Co-operations.

Co-operation amongst private nurses, so that a high standard of efficiency may be maintained—and the nurses receive a full remuneration for their services—has the full sympathy of every intelligent and liberal-minded person, and it would seem an easy matter to draw up a Constitution which should be just to all classes of the community.

But is it so easy? Apparently not. In the working of the majority of such Co-operations the workers are by no means entirely satisfied with the regulations under which they work.

We will take the four most important Co-operations, those that pay 7½ per cent. on their earnings to keep up their society. These are the Nurses' Co-operation, the Registered Nurses' Society, the Chartered Nurses' Society, London, and the Co-operation of Trained Nurses, Glasgow. The organisation of each of these societies differs, and the only one founded on safe and right lines, giving to the nurses economic and professional independence, is the Registered Nurses' Society.

The Registered Nurses' Society is formed of the nurse members—the nurses *are* the Society—in annual meeting assembled, these members elect their hon. and salaried officers and their committee. The hon. officers consist of an active trained Nurse Superintendent, and a Medical Treasurer. The chief salaried officer is an experienced certificated nurse. The Committee is formed of Matrons, medical men, and nurse members. A small Executive Board elected by the Executive Committee composed of five persons, of whom two are nurse members, meets constantly and does much of the routine work. This Board goes through all applications for membership—it requires primarily a three years' certificate of training, and recommends members for election. The nurses on the Committee are encouraged to take an active interest in the management of their own society, and have every opportunity of expressing opinions and voting on every question of finance, discipline, and management. This is what we call co-operation. Any organisation which precludes the nurses from full membership of their society and full participation in its management sails under a misleading flag, and is not a Co-operation at all.

Thus the Nurses' Co-operation, London, is not, in our opinion, a Co-operation of nurses. It is formed of ladies and gentlemen who employ nurses, and although the nurses have representation on the committee, they have no real power, as they are not *members* of the Co-operation. Their position is that of employer and employed, and until the Articles of Association are revised, they should realise this in their attitude towards the Committee of Management. The nurses have accepted service under this Constitution, and to attempt, therefore, to dictate to their employers is not reasonable. The members of the Co-operation have considered their interests in many ways, noticeably in placing thoroughly qualified nurses in the senior salaried positions, which is of the utmost importance in managing a professional concern. A two years' certificate of training qualifies for employment with an extra year's experience.

The Chartered Nurses' Society—the workers of which

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)