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A Retrospect of Nursing Events during 1903.

As our current issue is the last in the present year, according to our custom we devote some space to reviewing the chief events of professional interest during that period.

ORGANISATION.

AT HOME.

Organisation is proceeding on the best possible lines—namely, by growth in the Leagues (which represent the graduate vote), and the nursing franchise. The development of hitherto unsuspected talents in connection with the Leagues already in existence is very notable. In the conduct of public business, by fluent and closely-reasoned speeches, the members have shown not only their desire, but their ability, to deal with their own professional affairs. Already matters of great importance are being referred to them for their consideration, and signs are not wanting that the Leagues appreciate their corporate responsibilities. Thus the pioneer and largest League, that of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, at its last meeting showed conclusively not only that it grasped the vital importance of the movement for State Registration of Trained Nurses, but also that it would be an indignity for the League to take no part in formulating the laws under which the members desired to work. It therefore took the rational step of accepting the courteous invitation of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses to appoint a representative on to its Executive Committee. At the same meeting the League expressed its willingness to co-operate with other Leagues and Associations of Nurses formed and governed by themselves. It is to be hoped, therefore, that these will follow suit, and, as the President, Miss Isla Stewart, well expressed it, will put out hands to touch one another, as such action must result in mutual benefit.

A word of welcome must be extended to the most recently-formed League, that of the Leicester Infirmary Nurses, who have responded cordially to the invitation of its widely-respected Matron, Miss G. A. Rogers, to associate themselves together in a Society of their own.

The natural development of the Leagues in the

future is the formation by delegation of a National Council of Nurses which can enter into relations with the International Council of Nurses, and so bring the nurses of the world into direct contact with one another.

ABROAD.

In other European countries, signs are not wanting that nurses are feeling the need of professional societies. In Germany the first woman to proclaim this publicly was Frau Krukenberg Conze, in her capacity of Chairman of the Universal German Women's Union. At a meeting of this Union, 230 representatives of 80,000 German women endorsed the declaration that the care of the sick was a civil profession for women; not a monopoly of clerical and charitable associations, or a branch of domestic service. A co-operative society of German nurses, of which an interesting account is given by Fraulein Agnes Karll in *Die Krankenpflege*, has now been formed, which binds together groups and associations of nurses in various places in Germany and abroad with a central organisation in Berlin. The principle is a sound and excellent one, and we wish it all prosperity. In France, Dr. Anna Hamilton is doing excellent work in the cause of organisation, and has greatly stimulated the better practical education of nurses. At the third National Congress for Public and Private Charities, held in Bordeaux in June last, the subject of the "professional instruction and position of the nursing staff of hospitals" aroused immense interest, the largest hall of the Athenæum being crowded for the first and last time during the Congress.

Four reports were presented, one of these being by Dr. Hamilton, and afterwards questions raised in them were voted upon. It is interesting to note that not only in this country is the nursing question a contentious one. At the conference in question there was a "violent discussion," which lasted more than three hours; doctors and hospital guardians from many towns made speeches for and against reform; there was an "insulting assault" by a guardian on the Mayor of Bordeaux because of his advocacy of hospital reform, and "uproar" many times filled the great hall when the most exciting points had to be voted on. A question which we are happily spared in England and Scotland, but which complicates nursing matters in France, is the religious question; thus the proposition that probationers should be well-educated girls was so violently discussed that it

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