

Our Foreign Letter.

NURSING IN AMERICA AND IN FRANCE.

A lecture on the above subject was given in Paris



at the Grand Palais of the *Champs Elysées* by Pastor Wagner, who has recently returned from America, having been the invited guest of President

Rooseveltdt. Pastor Wagner is a very popular and successful speaker, an author of many books, and possesses a great deal of intellectual force and energy.

He, therefore, held the audience in breathless attention while he spoke on the nursing question, which has become a very burning one in France; in fact, at moments it seems to me one hears of nothing else. The large hall was packed not only with a very fashionable and cultured class of women, but an equally large number of serious thinking men, both young and old, great doctors, and men of high positions and learning.

Mr. Wagner first spoke of the feeling of responsibility we ought to have for our neighbours, especially so for those who are thrown down and disabled by sickness and calamities; he pointed out that it was *everybody's* duty to think of the sick, the infirm, the insane, and that no one had a right to throw the burden on others.

He then showed that "devotion" was very essential in nursing the sick, but that devotion alone without knowledge became positively dangerous. This led him to speak of the American-trained nurses as they had appeared to him.

He said that the more he observed and studied them the more he admired them, and the more it seemed to him that their hospital life and training had developed them, strengthened them, and dignified their characters. It seemed to him that everyone of them had become *a somebody*. He spoke of the simple unostentatious way they nursed infectious cases, the insane and the infirm, as well as the varied and interesting cases.

Madame Alphen Salvador sat at his right hand on the platform, and several of her nurses, in navy blue uniforms, sat amongst the audience. He spoke of her school and said he was one of the first members of the committee.

They had started in 1900 in the Rue Garansière with two or three nurses, and they now had a surgical home, and their nurse pupils, past and present, now numbered thirty-four. Some of them were still learning, others were nursing in the home, the hospital, and private families, whilst others were holding posts in provincial hospitals, where they were working at hospital reform and the training of others.

He wisely remarked that the older this school grew the more valuable it would become, because the longer they existed and worked the more experienced and ripe they would become—that American nurses had the advantage of a *traditional atmosphere* in their hospitals—which was more useful than theory, and a good deal of learning.

France, he went on, must make her own experience

and develop the nursing in her own way, for what is feasible and good in one nation is not in another; but, he added, "woe betide the nation that shuts itself up at home and will not look around to see what others are doing and who is too proud to adopt what is good in others."

Finally, he begged people to think seriously of the question, to follow Madame Alphen Salvador's example, and to start other training schools, and he entreated young French ladies to come forward and undertake this noble work. E. R. WORTABET.

The Conference on School Hygiene.

The Conference on School Hygiene, organised by the Royal Sanitary Institute, which opened, as we reported, at London University, South Kensington, on Tuesday in last week, and was continued on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, was organised with the view of maintaining interest in, and paving the way for, an International Congress on the same subject, which will be held in London in 1907.

On Wednesday morning, February 8th, the special subject was "Physical and Mental Development." Sir Lauder Brunton, who presided, said that the object of the Conference was to decide how such training had best be given so as to turn out children possessed of healthy bodies, sound minds, and upright characters. Lady Londonderry, who came as a delegate from the Durham County Council, said that the physical education of girls was a matter of pressing importance. Although more attention was paid to physical education than formerly, children were even now kept sitting still far too long at a time. She could bear witness that where physical exercises were properly taught, by trained teachers, the health of the children materially and visibly improved.

The Registration of Physical Teachers was advocated by Mrs. Woodhouse, of Clapton High School.

"Sleep in Relation to Education" was the subject of a paper by Dr. Clement Dukes, who contended that both in primary and secondary schools children were so worked as to be deprived of the brain rest or sleep which was essential to their healthy development.

In the afternoon Lord Reay, who presided, commended for imitation the practice in the United States of securing constant meeting between the mothers of the children and the teachers. The school as a domestic social agent was, he said, as important as it was in its purely pedagogic aspect.

Resolutions in favour of entrusting the inspection of domestic subjects to women, and of appointing women inspectors for infants' and girls' schools, pupil teachers' centres, and training colleges were passed at this meeting.

On Thursday the subject was "Schools," their building and equipment being considered in the morning session, and their sanitary inspection in the afternoon.

On Friday the subject for the day was "Training in Hygiene," the morning session, under the Presidency of Sir William Collins, being devoted to the training of teachers.

The Conference should certainly achieve the object of arousing interest in the question of School Hygiene.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)