

The International Council of State Registration up to Date. Nurses.

Miss L. L. Dock, the hon. secretary of the International Council of Nurses, informs us that at an early date she will be ready to arrange the programme for the forthcoming Nursing Conference, which is to be held in Paris in June, 1907. Already Miss Nutting has consented to read a paper on "The Practical Training of Nurses," and no doubt our French sisters will appreciate the privilege of discussing systems of training with the lady who has inaugurated and made thoroughly successful the very best practical method of training nurses which has had a fair trial at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. The Session in which Miss Nutting, who is a Professor at Columbia University, New York, takes part will no doubt be a very great occasion, and one which is sure to draw together many of those sincerely interested in nursing education.

A meeting of the English Councillors of the International Council of Nurses will take place at an early date to arrange the practical details in connection with the Conference. One thing is quite certain, and that is, following the example of the hostesses at the recent meeting of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance at Copenhagen, we must have a Pleasures' Committee. Paris and pleasure are synonymous.

The Nursing Exhibition.

St. George's Hall, Mount Street, London, W., has been secured by the Provisional Committee of the National Council of Nurses for three days from Thursday, November 22nd, to Saturday, November 24th next, in which to hold a Conference on the Nursing of Tuberculosis and on Maternity and Mental Nursing, each speciality to be treated by eminent specialists and to be practically illustrated.

Owing to the keen interest in the Registration question by so many of the prominent members of affiliated nursing societies, the organisation of a comprehensive Nursing Exhibition has been deferred, and a modified scheme, suggested by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, has been substituted. For three days there will be on exhibition at St. George's Hall all available practical appliances used in the nursing of these cases, and space will be found for any useful invention by nurses which can be shown on a stand or table. Admission to the conferences and exhibition will be free, and communications should be sent to Miss Barton, Matron, Chelsea Infirmary, S.W.

The State Registration of Trained Nurses is a question which is now prominently before the public, many members of which are asking for information concerning it.

As trained nurses in this and other countries, the medical profession, and a Select Committee of the House of Commons have passed resolutions in favour of legislation, we propose in this article to address the general public, hoping to arouse such widespread interest in, and knowledge of, the national importance of the question that energetic support and encouragement may be given to our legislators to pass a Bill providing for the Registration of Trained Nurses at an early date.

AN EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT.

The movement for the State Registration of Nurses, which is primarily an educational one, was initiated nearly twenty years ago by trained nurses who realised the danger of the lack of organisation amongst those claiming to rank as professional nurses.

It will be readily understood that it is of extreme importance to the public that those who undertake the increasingly responsible duties which devolve upon trained nurses should not only be trustworthy but skilled in their professional duties, and that the community should be provided with public safeguards in this matter. These safeguards are at present non-existent. Not only does every hospital decide a term and standard of training and confer its own certificate, but many women claiming to be, and working as, trained nurses have never received any systematic instruction, others again, have had a few months' training, in and obtained a certificate from, a special hospital, as, for instance in maternity work. Certificates, therefore, have no definite value and may be most misleading.

It is contended that in the public interest nursing should be organised without delay and that the only satisfactory method is by obtaining legislative enactment regulating the system of nursing education and examination by a central authority, and providing for the registration of all nurses who give evidence of attaining the defined standard, and whose good character is certified by their training schools, thus enabling the public to distinguish qualified from unqualified nurses.

It is not claimed that such a system would result in the publication of a Register of perfect nurses, but it is claimed that if it were enforced, an efficient test would for the first time be imposed, and the public without being dispensed from enquiry in the case of individual nurses would have the best available guarantee of their professional competency.

THE PRESENT POSITION

Briefly the position is as follows:

That the great development of medical and surgical science necessitates a rising standard of nursing and it is therefore essential that nurses should give evidence of a minimum amount of technical knowledge before being entrusted with the care of the sick.

That at the present time any person without any

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