

Cheyne-Stokes character breathing is often the only warning that a convulsion is pending. In these cases the pulse rate is slow—18, 24, or 30 to the minute—and the breathing is often unchanged.

Heart Disease.—There is always shortness of breath and the slightest exertion will cause discomfort. These patients are often unable to lie down in bed.

Fevers.—There is always a marked change in the respirations owing to high temperature.

We highly commend the papers by Miss Rowena J. Lush, Miss Amy Phipps, Miss Elsie Gibson, Miss E. Bleazby, Miss M. Sutton, Miss Deacon, Miss G. Roberts, and Miss Elder.

Miss Lush mentions orthopnea, "the term applied to an affection in which the patient is obliged to sit up in order to breathe. This is the case in many pulmonary and cardiac diseases. . . . Stridor is crowing breathing, due to spasm of the larynx; also called laryngismus stridulus."

Miss M. Sutton says that "restricted" breathing is met with in cases of pleurisy, pneumonia (one lung being affected), or in fracture of the ribs. Restricted respiration is a sign of pain, an endeavour on the part of the patient to save unnecessary exertion and suffering.

Miss Gibson refers to noisy, rapid respirations, accompanied with a sharp, piercing cry, as in meningitis. Also to the whoop, characteristic of whooping cough, which occurs on inspiration after the short, rapid, successive coughs.

Miss G. Roberts mentions the alarming condition indicated in diphtheria, when there is great dyspnea accompanied by retraction of the chest walls as well as of the abdominal walls below the diaphragm, indicating the blocking of the larynx by the diphtheritic membrane. This condition is less frequently seen, since the introduction of the anti-toxin treatment, which attacks the microbe causing the disease. It may be necessary to perform tracheotomy below the obstruction, and so admit air to the lungs through the opening into the trachea. The operation, which usually affords great relief, in no way affects the course of the disease, but is an expedient to gain time while the disease is treated.

#### QUESTION FOR THIS WEEK.

Describe a curriculum which would qualify a Sister to become an efficient teacher of practical nursing in the wards.

Rules for competing in this competition will be found on page xii.

## Nurses of Note.

### LINDA RICHARDS.

The history of pioneers is always to be cherished, and a book of exceptional interest to nurses is "Reminiscences of America's First Trained Nurse," in which Miss Linda Richards simply and unaffectedly gives us her autobiography. Miss Richards has seen the birth of professional nursing in the United States, and assisted in its full development, organised the first training school for nurses in Japan, and also schools in connection with hospitals for the insane in America, holding that "it stands to reason that the mentally sick should be at least as well cared for as the physically sick."

The introduction to the book relates that "those at whose urging it has been written believe it to be not only a very interesting story but also one of great historical value. For Linda Richards has been a pioneer. She has blazed the pathway for a distinct advance in civilisation. Many American nurses likewise are entitled to high honour for what they have done in establishing the new profession of nursing, and in extending the field of its beneficence; but Linda Richards, as her sisters all acclaim, outranks them all, not only in priority of her diploma's date, but also in the wide extent and variety of her services."

From the introduction also we learn that when, in 1877, Miss Richards went to study the methods of the Nursing School at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, Miss Florence Nightingale wrote to the Matron, Miss Pringle, as follows:—

"A Miss Richards, a Boston lady, training Matron to the Massachusetts General Hospital, has in a very spirited manner come to us for training to herself. She would have taken the ordinary year's training with us, but her authorities would not hear of it, and we admitted her as a visitor. I have seen her, and have seldom seen anyone who struck me as so admirable. I think we have as much to learn from her as she from us."

Of herself, Miss Richards writes: "On the Richards side I am of English descent. Seven of ten brothers came to America in 1630. Many of our Richards ancestors were ministers and doctors. . . . My mother was a Sinclair, and sprang from the Sinclairs of the Orkney Isles. These people were great fighters. One fought in the English army when Quebec was taken; later he served as Colonel in the American Revolution." Miss Richards was born in a little town near Potsdam, New York.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)