

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

THE AMERICAN NURSING WORLD.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have just come from a conference with the joint executive committees of our National Societies—the American Nurses' Association, the National League for Nursing Education, and the National Organisation for Public Health Nursing. There we drew the first general lines for the structure of our meetings in 1915.

I must explain a little first about the reorganisation of our nursing societies. The American Nurses' Association is the new form of our National Alumnae Societies (Leagues), and is now so planned that it takes other societies, local or national, into membership, though they retain complete identity, as in the National Councils of Women, and as in your National Council of Nurses. The State Societies belong to it, and all the local groups as well. The League for Nursing Education is the new name of our old Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses. It now no longer restricts its membership to women in training-school work, but admits those identified with training and education outside of hospitals, as Miss Wald and other heads of visiting nursing settlements or departments, heads of public school nursing staffs, and the nurse teachers at Teachers' College. As the American Nurses' Association and the State Societies now devote themselves to the general problems, the League for Nursing Education intends to emphasise its special attention to educational problems. It is now a member of the American Nursing Association.

The organisation for Public Health Nursing is recently created, and bids fair to become an immense and powerful body. It is composed of the many and varied associations which are devoting themselves to public health work (these associations, in general, being composed largely of lay people), but the nurses working with or for them are alone eligible as officers and delegates. This body is also a member of the American Nurses' Association. Its President is Miss Wald, R.N. and LL.D., head and founder of the Nurses' Settlement in New York; its secretary, Miss Crandall, who has been at Teacher's College with Miss Nutting.

The President of the Superintendents, or League for Nursing Education, is Miss Wheeler, from Chicago; the secretary, Miss Catton, of Massachusetts. At the head of the American Nurses' Association is Miss McIsaac, now in the War Department, in charge of army nursing, and the secretary is Miss Deans, of Detroit. Among the members of the three executive committees, which are now meeting to plan for next year's sessions at Atlantic City, are Miss Delano, Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service; Miss Goodrich, Inspector of Training Schools under the Regents of New York, and President of

the International Council of Nurses; Miss Nutting, Professor of Nursing and Health at Teacher's College; and a number of others not yet personally known to your readers, but who, we hope, will be in another three years.

All these branches of our National Society will meet in San Francisco in 1915, and there will be a Congress in which the American societies will co-operate with the International. Each of them will hold only a brief business session unto itself, and merge its usual programme of papers into the Congress. The International will have as usual its day of ceremonial, which will be attended by all the others. The Congress will in all probability have to be divided into sections, for there will be, it is conjectured, about three thousand nurses present. If possible, one general session will be planned, and the rest of the time given to sectional meetings, so that there will be time enough for special subjects to receive attention. It is a little too soon to be sure where our meetings will be held.

The California nurses write of a group of splendid buildings to be erected in the city as a civic centre. The World's Fair officers write of meeting-halls in the Exposition grounds.

A joint programme committee will be formed later to work out the entire programme. On this will be the President and Secretary of the International Council.

As far back as last June it was agreed by the American nurses that they would try to present an adequate exhibit at San Francisco, showing the development of nursing in the United States as fully as possible. There are large plans in the air, but not yet sufficiently formed to report.

The next Annual Meetings will take place next June at Atlantic City, and it seems to be generally thought that June will be the best month for San Francisco.

L. L. Dock.

A MATRON'S LIBEL ACTION.

Miss Elizabeth Birnie Couper, Matron of the Clackmannon Infectious Diseases Hospital, Alloa, last week brought an action in the Court of Session, Edinburgh, against Lord Balfour of Burleigh, for £2,000 damages for alleged libel.

Miss Couper asserts that letters written by the defendant to the County Clerk and the Local Government Board, contained reflections upon her professional capacity, and that though she was exonerated after an exhaustive official enquiry, the defendant declined to withdraw his allegations.

For Lord Balfour counsel claimed that the action should be dismissed as irrelevant, as there were no relevant averments of malice or want of probable cause. The plaintiff's counsel on the other hand maintained that the letters were defamatory and that there was no privilege. The question as to whether the action should be allowed to go forward was adjourned until Thursday, November 21st.

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