

flats, and other purposes. Dr. Ferroni presides over this hospital, which is situated not far from the Via Cavour.

A young doctor in an immaculate white coat kindly conducted us round. The dominant note is white. The walls inside and outside are white. The bed quilts and bedgowns, the dress of the attendants are all white; to carry the tradition to a logical conclusion, any present given to a patient (I assume clothing is meant) must be *white*! To an English nurse accustomed to so much colour in the hospitals, the total lack of it gave a very cold appearance. The absence of flowers was painfully conspicuous. It is the custom here to separate the married mothers from the unmarried ones, in wards on opposite sides of the hospital. The patients looked happy and comfortable, and the wards clean and neat; but I must confess to a shock at seeing a midwife attending to a newly-delivered mother without a screen and the door open!

In addition to the Maternity Department, there is also a fine gynaecological department, and one for infectious cases, with separate entrance and separate theatre. There is also a separate department for the treatment of bladder and kidney cases. The corridors are wide and airy, and would serve well as promenades for convalescent patients. The period of training for midwives is two years. They are not trained in general nursing, but are no doubt very efficient midwives. The professors instruct the male students, and the latter instruct the female students. One wonders why there should be this preferential treatment; the reason was not given. The hospital accommodates about 150 patients. The babies are swaddled, but the little arms are left free. The old-fashioned custom of mother and babe sharing the same bed prevails here. Perhaps Italian mothers are particularly careful; but knowing how easy it can be for a mother to overlay her new-born babe, it is a pity that the custom is not universally abolished.

BEATRICE KENT.

(To be concluded.)

#### COMING EVENTS.

February 15th.—Constitutional Labour Party. Public meeting. "The Need of Organisation amongst Nurses." Chair: Mr. G. K. Naylor, J.P. The Central Library Hall, Holloway Road, Islington, N.

February 17th.—Her Majesty the Queen lays the Foundation Stone of Queen Mary's Home for St. Bartholomew's Nurses. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, E.C. 3 p.m.

February 17th.—Monthly Meeting, Central Midwives' Board, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Dartmouth Street, Westminster.

February 26th.—Miss Margaret Murray (Assistant to Professor Flinders Petrie) will conduct nurses over Egyptian Collection of the University College, Gower Street. 2.30 p.m.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.*

### A WISE DECISION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to thank you for the copy of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING which you forwarded me last week and to inform you that I was already in possession of the copy, as the General Nursing Council for Ireland made arrangements some time ago with Messrs. Eason, Dublin, to supply the periodical weekly.

I have also to inform you that the Council have now been informed by the Chief Secretary that it is within their power to prescribe a year's approved hospital training as a minimum qualification for existing nurses, and in the circumstances the Council have amended their Rules to this effect.

The Irish Rules will now be identical with the English Rules, with a modification providing for the admission of nurses who have been employed as "qualified" nurses in the Irish Poor-Law Service with the approval of the Local Government Board, within the meaning of the Board's General Order of July 5th, 1901, relating to nursing.

Yours sincerely,

LEO HARRIS, Registrar.

33, St. Stephen's Green N., Dublin.

February 3rd, 1921.

[We heartily congratulate the General Nursing Council for Ireland, and Irish nurses, on this decision; it will bring the standards of Irish and English nurses into closer union for registration purposes.—ED.]

### A CHALLENGE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—A Governor of St. Thomas's Hospital, on its platform, has, with no uncertain voice, expressed his disapproval of a trade union for the nurses, and, although the case against trade unionism was placed before the nurses of St. Thomas's Hospital, they were not permitted to hear the case for it and so to judge of its merits for themselves. Yet at a public meeting held last week at Swansea, the Chairman of the College of Nursing (Limited) and Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital—Sir Arthur Stanley—specially thanked the trade union men for the subscriptions they had sent to help the nurses to organise. The members of the Professional Union of Trained Nurses (Registered under the Trades Union Act) hereby challenge the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, Mr. Minet (Governor of St. Thomas's Hospital) and the Matron, to explain a position which, while it permits them to accept and use trade union money to "organise" the nurses, yet holds that a trade

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