

CHRISTOPHER WREN.

In these days of narrow and steadily increasing specialisation, it is refreshing to study one who grappled with life and its problems on a grand scale.

To Sir Christopher Wren, whose 300th birthday fell on October 20th, the frontiers between the individual natural sciences were like spiders' webs in that they entangled the weak but were broken by the strong. One of the most sympathetic and interesting figures in English science, his energy was unquenchable, his versatility little short of miraculous. As an architect he has left memorials of himself in S. Paul's Cathedral; S. Martin's, Ludgate; S. Bride, Fleet Street; S. Dunstan in the East; S. James', Piccadilly; S. Mary-le-Bow; Hampton Court Palace; Greenwich Hospital; Banqueting Hall, Kensington Gardens; who can name them all? From the ashes of the Great Fire he raised up a city of splendid buildings and imposing churches. His connections with medicine are many and curious, he may be described as the Father of Intravenous Therapy, for he was the first to inject drugs into the veins of animals and to study their effect. He advocated an operation for removing the spleen with safety. His fine and striking illustrations to Thomas Willis's *Anatomy of the Brain* are familiar. His method of purifying sickrooms by nitrous fumes is known to few.

Wren died in 1723, and was buried in the crypt of S. Paul's, with the well-known inscription above his tomb: "Si monumentum requiris, circumspice." (If you seek his monument, look around you.)

The remarkable Tercentenary Exhibition held at S. Paul's will help to keep green the memory of a remarkable personality.

W. R. B.

COMING EVENTS.

November 9th.—The Matron-in-Chief and Members of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service "At Home." Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W. 3.30 to 6 p.m.

November 10th.—British College of Nurses, Administration Class. Visit to the Nursing Department and Preliminary Training School, London Hospital, E. 2.30 p.m.

November 11th.—Armistice Day Celebrations. Before 11 a.m. the King will place a wreath on the Cenotaph. 11 a.m., Two Minutes' Silence.

November 12th.—Nurses' Club, Bath Street, Glasgow. Whist Drive, 2.45–6 p.m. Tickets, 2s.

November 19th.—British College of Nurses. Meeting of Council. 39, Portland Place, London, W.1. 2.15 p.m.

November 22nd.—Nurses' Club, Bath Street, Glasgow. Dance, 7.30 p.m. Tickets, 3s.

November 23rd.—National Council of Nurses of Great Britain. Annual Meeting of Grand Council, 39, Portland Place, London, W.1. Tea, by invitation of the President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, 4 p.m. Meeting, 4.30 p.m.

November 25th.—General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Monthly Meeting. 20, Portland Place, London, W.1.

November 25th.—East London Children's Hospital, Shadwell, E. Mr. H. E. G. Boyle, O.B.E., Senior Anaesthetist, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Lantern Lecture on "The History of Anaesthesia." The Chair will be taken by Mr. Eric W. Gandy, O.B.E., Senior Anaesthetist, Westminster Hospital. Visitors cordially invited. 8.45 p.m.

November 29th.—British College of Nurses. Meeting Tutorial Group. Paper upon "Drugs and Serum," by Miss H. G. Ballard, Sister-Tutor St. Leonard's Hospital. 5.30 p.m.

December 3rd.—League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses. General Meeting. Class Room, Nurses' Home, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 3 p.m. Social Gathering 4 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.

THE PRINCIPLE IN A NUTSHELL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Just a word on the forthcoming Election of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

I gather there is a difference of opinion amongst candidates. In supporting one or the other, what the Registered Nurses will really be voting for, or against, is (1) *The Lancet* Commission for lay control of the preliminary examination, or (2) the preservation of professional control of such examinations. The principle in a nutshell.

How true were the words of Jefferson, when he warned the American people that reforms can only be maintained by "eternal vigilance."

Let us hope the Registered Nurses will guard their hardly won status.

Yours truly,

MARGARET BREAY.

THE ONE PORTAL OF ENTRY TO THE STATE REGISTER.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—The truth hits very hard especially when it is seen in print, and those in hospitals realise more and more how ignorant the average nurse is of her Status as a nurse, and I am sorry to admit have no idea of the meaning of "One portal of entry."

Why do they not know? First, because it has cost them nothing, they may have paid Examination fees but have never stimulated enough enthusiasm to find out the early history of the State Registration Movement or even to be interested in the lives of those wonderful Pioneers of Nursing who supported it. Secondly, many are misguided by the modern literature of the nursing world, and we regret by those who fail to give "Honour where Honour is due." Where would nurses have been to-day if Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and her staunch supporters had not devoted time, money, and energy to the cause of State Registration? We cannot ever thank them enough, and now that the General Nursing Council has been such a successful body, are they going to spoil things by dividing the Examination?

How could a definite standard of Anatomy and Physiology be taught other than in a Hospital, where the Medical or Nursing Tutor can give life to the skeleton and so interpret the subject to the interest of probationers?

If these subjects are removed from the Sister Tutor's duties, what will creep in? The post, which to most of us is one of intense interest in endeavouring to inspire these young nurses with a love for their fellow creatures, and to encourage the instinct of curiosity to find out to the core the substance of what is taught them, will become mechanical and lose status.

Let us see to it that we give our Votes in the forthcoming Election to those who will carry on the good work of the G.N.C. and maintain the "ONE PORTAL OF ENTRY."

H. G. BALLARD, D.N.

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