

Kensington Gardens makes it the envy of nurses whose lot is not cast in such cool and restful surroundings.

The R.B.N.A. Supplement which usually appears in this Journal is omitted this month, as the attention of the nursing world has during the past few weeks been concentrated upon the International Congress of Nurses, and as much space as possible has been devoted to the Congress reports.

The Annual Report of the Overseas Nursing Association (the headquarters of which are at the Imperial Institute, S.W.) is always an interesting record and the one just published (the thirty-seventh) is quite up to standard. From it we learn that the Silver Badge of the Association has been awarded to 60 Nursing Sisters who have completed five years' satisfactory service abroad, and that there are 539 nurses who now possess this badge. Also that the addition of a bar and riband to the Silver Badge for ten years' good service has been awarded to 20 Matrons and Nurses, bringing the number up to 177. The names of six nurses who have retired from the Association "after long and faithful service" of from twelve to twenty-one years have been placed on the Roll of Merit.

The letters published from some of the nurses show the strenuous nature of the work. One writes from Newfoundland, "My centre is over a hundred miles from a doctor. I have had anxious moments when I knew my patients really needed a doctor. Twice I have had to take acute cases in a small boat to the Hospital 130 miles away.

"I stay in three different parts of my centre in turn, and in each one there are nice comfortable living quarters with plenty of room. In winter seal meat is our chief food. At first I could not eat it, but now enjoy it as much as a roast of mutton. Bear meat is also very tempting after a long journey. The bears have gone to sleep now and will sleep till spring."

Six Ceylonese nurses who were sent to England in 1928 for general and midwifery training all passed their general and C.M.B. examinations and returned to Ceylon in the summer of 1932.

We notice on the Agenda for the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women of Great Britain at Torquay in October a Resolution sent in by the Cambridge Branch in relation to the training of nurses:—

"That this Council is of opinion that in order to increase the number of suitable candidates for the Nursing Profession it should be made possible for pupils to take part of the preliminary examination before leaving a secondary school, thus stimulating their interest and relieving the pressure of the first year in hospital."

It is to be regretted that before putting down a resolution concerning the education of a highly skilled profession, associations of nurses affiliated to the National Council of Women have not been consulted. As a member of several such associations we can testify that they have not. One sometimes wonders if it is worth while for professional women to support a National Council of Women which fails to consult their organisations on professional matters.

Mr. L. G. Brock, C.B., Chairman of the Board of Control, speaking recently at the Annual meeting of the Mental Hospitals Association welcomed the steady progress made in the provision of nurses' homes and hostels, but was not satisfied that we were getting in all our hospitals probationers educated to "absorb all the theoretical instinct" which a good nurse really needed.

We are glad that Mr. Brock appreciates the importance of a good general education as a basis for the professional training of nurses, and in no branch of the profession is this more necessary than in that of mental nursing.

When the prizes, medals, and certificates for 1932 and 1933 were presented to the nurses of St. Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth, by the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. W. A. Billing, on July 28th, the Medical Superintendent, Dr. R. C. Macpherson, put forward the suggestion that it would be wise for a city like Portsmouth, with its large hospitals, to set up a College for nursing and lead the country in this respect. He would like the City Fathers to think of the possibility of creating two lectureships on nursing in the Municipal College to be held by trained nurses. Many girls, said Dr. Macpherson, left school at the age of fifteen with a desire to become nurses, but it was impossible for the hospital to take them under eighteen. A college for nursing would enable them to bridge the gulf between the two ages.

There is undoubtedly a need of Preliminary Training Schools for Nurses whether under that name or under the name of Colleges for nursing, provided that the training given is in accordance with a Scheme laid down by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Under the Nurses' Registration Act the General Nursing Council has the authority and, indeed, the duty, to prescribe the training to be undergone by candidates for admission to the State Register. So far it has only defined a Scheme of Examination, and in the interests of the nurses, the Schools and the public, the duty of defining the prescribed Scheme of Training should be undertaken without delay.

Turning recently over the pages of the "Dictionary of the English Language," by the immortal Samuel Johnson, revised in 1848, we came on the learned doctor's definition of the word Nurse: "A woman that has the care of another's child; a woman that has care of a sick person: one who breeds, educates, or protects," no hint of training in a hospital being necessary, perhaps because it was so little recognised as requisite, though Mrs. Fry, and others had founded the Institution of Nursing Sisters, in Devonshire Square, and St. John's House was beginning its good work of training women as nurses at Westminster, Middlesex, and King's College Hospitals. Well, we have progressed since those days. What would Dr. Johnson have thought of Miss Nightingale's definition of a Nurse, in Quain's Dictionary of Medicine?

*The Nursing Journal of India* publishes in the July issue a first instalment of letters from Miss Florence Nightingale in the possession of the Christian Literature Society, Madras, which that society has in its possession,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)