

the prospectus of Nursing Education which we published last week: "This education is taken before entering the wards; a probationer's time being too much occupied with ward work to admit of time for theoretical teaching."

On April 25th, 1889, while considering this same subject, we made in this Journal the following prophecy: "Reasoning from analogy, therefore, . . . it appears to us that we shall probably see a Preliminary Examination instituted for Nurses, and only those, who are successful in passing it, become eligible for admission to a Training School. Perhaps, at first, the subjects of this Examination would comprise only the elements of an ordinary English education, but modern languages, or the details of house-keeping might well be made optional subjects, proficiency in either or both of which would confer a higher place in the Pass List. The advantages of such an examination as this are obvious. Not only would it ensure that Nursing, like the other professions, would only be open to educated people, but it would immediately and largely diminish the excessive crowding into the ranks which is now prevalent." Once more, this prophecy of 1889 reads curiously, in juxtaposition with the first paragraph of the new Scheme of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, quoted in our last issue: "No Candidate will be eligible for the courses of instruction until she has satisfied the Managers as to her knowledge of grammar, composition, spelling, dictation, reading, writing, and arithmetic."

We need not pursue this retrospect further at present, except to express our congratulations to Mrs. STRONG upon the indisputable honour which belongs to her, and to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, of initiating a system which we believe as firmly to-day, as we believed four years ago, will, with some differences of detail, become, in time, the recognised and general course of Nursing education.

There is one point, however, in which we feel convinced the Glasgow scheme might be modified with much practical advantage, and admiring, as we do, the remainder of the proposals, we feel no hesitation in commending our criticism to the attention of Mrs.

STRONG and the Committee of the Royal Infirmary. The prospectus clearly provides that candidates, who have satisfied the Managers of their general educational acquirements, and who have successfully proved their knowledge of the subjects taught to them in the Lectures on Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene, must, before they enter the Wards as Probationers, furthermore attend a course of lectures and demonstrations on medical cases, surgical cases, ward work, and cookery. Now, this appears to us, for various reasons, to be a mistake. Turning, for a moment, to the education of medical students, we find that they are compelled to spend the first eighteen months or so of their curriculum in the study, at the College attached to the Hospital, of theoretical subjects. Their knowledge of these subjects is then tested by examination, and if they are found proficient, then, and not until then, they commence their practical work in the Wards. Concurrently with, and explanatory of, the actual cases which they see, they receive clinical instruction. And the advantages of the plan are manifest. But, in the case of Nurses—who have not had, and cannot, of course, obtain, the complete knowledge of the human organism in health, which prepares the medical student to understand the effects produced upon it by various accidents and diseases—it is, surely, somewhat premature to give lectures and demonstrations upon surgical and medical cases concerning whose past history these ladies will know but little, and whose future progress they will probably comprehend still less. We have no hesitation in believing that such instruction must not only be wholly theoretical, but that most of it will be speedily forgotten; because it will not receive immediate and practical application by the Nurse's personal experience. So while we would suggest that housekeeping should be made part of the preliminary educational examination and be acquired outside the Hospital altogether; while we cordially approve of a course of sick cookery, but would suggest that it might be included in the first professional course; we would venture very strongly to recommend that after the Candidate has

The "NURSING RECORD" has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

Why does the **Bracher-Patent** Water Condenser give such general satisfaction? Because all impurities are removed and the Apparatus is simple, perfectly automatic, and quite reliable. Price lists post free.—JOHN A. GILBERT & Co., Sole Manufacturers, 4, Mount Pleasant, Gray's Inn Road London, W.C.

previous page

next page