

Nursing, 6 weeks, 60 dollars ; Electro Nursing, 12 weeks, 100 dollars ; Public School Nursing, 6 weeks, 50 dollars. The third annual meeting of the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses will be held in the Public Library, Berlin, on May 21st and 22nd, 1913.

The *Australasian Nurses' Journal* contains long lists of additional members of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, and other signs of advance. New hospitals and new departments of nursing work are being opened up all over the continent. The Queensland, West Australian and Tasmanian Branches have held successful annual meetings. That much has to be done however is shewn by the following cutting from the March number.

MATRON AS "GENERAL."

The Matron of a Queensland Hospital sends us a copy of an advertisement which appeared in the *North Queensland Register* of January 6th, thinking that it might amuse our readers. She adds: "The reason for the 'Woman' to be a member of the A.T.N.A.' is not apparent, but evidently the fame of our Association has reached far Camoooweeal."

The advertisement runs as follows:—

Applications are invited for a Married Couple for the Camoooweeal Cottage Hospital, at a salary of £120 per annum with board and quarters free. Woman to be a member of the A.T.N.A., and to act as matron, cook, laundress, and other household duties.

Man to act as Wardsman and otherwise generally useful.

(The Editor is anxious to record the progress of nursing in China and Japan. As nursing in these lands is largely in the hands of Missionary societies she will be glad if readers who have friends engaged in such work will gather information for publication in this Journal.)

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE OVERSTRAIN OF NURSES.

An Address by Dr. H. HECKER at the Cologne Congress.

Translated from the German by Gaius Praetorius and Anita Becker.

[Published by the I. C. N. 431, Oxford St., London.]

DR. Hecker in his pamphlet on "Overstrain in Nurses" traces the gradual development of nursing from the origin in the life of a family when the mother cared for the helpless ones, and the women of all kinds waited upon and helped the fighting men, down to the present day of 8-hour duty in hospital—three relays of nurses during the 24 hours—and a great deal of specialisation. We have those who specialize in every department. He points out that although

the modern hours on duty are less, the strain on nerves, temper and brain is greater because so much greater perfection is required in every branch of nursing nowadays than was thought necessary even a few years ago. Therefore the danger of overstrain is not in any way diminished and those in authority are advised to watch carefully for the signs of coming nervous breakdown in their staff. Particularly does he recommend that matrons should be chosen with the greatest of care not only as heads of a hospital or other institution, but also as women who have the intuition and sympathy of a finely developed womanly nature and who can effectually "mother" the nurses and train them up in the way they should go, ethically as well as professionally.

He points out that after the introduction of Christianity the church made the care of the sick one of her chief duties, and it counted as merit needing no earthly reward. In the old world nursing is still looked upon more or less as a Christian duty, and there are many who still do not see that remuneration is necessary or forget that in this branch of industry as in all others "the labourer is worthy of his hire." Underfeeding or unsuitable feeding, and night duty under conditions where proper rest by day is impossible, are mentioned as specially conducive to overstrain.

Brain and body being kept at tension at the same time is also conducive to breakdown. America, which has the highest developed organization, usually takes nurses from the educated classes, and the standard of nursing being high, the members of that profession are independent and the supply always exceeds the demand. In England these same conditions exist. But until lately Germany has gone on along the old lines and counted sick nursing as a religious work, not leading to independence and so not attracting the educated classes. The hours of duty are long, 13 and over, even up to 18½ hours, the training seems to be done with a view to getting cheap labour and much housework is still done by the nurses. Supervision also is inadequate and the training is not systematic. In fact the general arrangement of all nursing questions in Germany seems to be in urgent need of reorganisation and State legislation. Overstrain among nurses still seems to be quite a usual thing and suicides are far too common. Up till now America and Australia seem to be the only two countries who have adopted the wise plan of an 8 hours system of duty.

MARY BARTLETT.