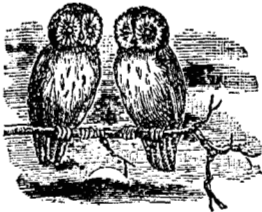


Matrons in Council.

THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF TRAINING SCHOOLS FOR NURSES.



THE Second Annual Meeting of the American Society of Training School Superintendents met in Boston, Mass., at "The Thorndike," on February 13th and 14th.

The officers of the Society present were:—President, Miss Linda

Richards, in the chair; Vice-President, Miss Irene Sutcliffe; Secretary, Miss Mary S. Littlefield; Treasurer, Miss Lucy L. Drown; Auditors, Miss Diana C. Kimber and Miss Ida Sutcliffe; Councillors, Mrs. Hunter Robb, Miss Mary A. Snively, Miss M. T. Merritt, Miss Anna C. Maxwell, Miss Gertrude Livingston and Miss Lavinia L. Dock, and the following three ladies, who compose the Committee of Bureau of Information, Miss Emma L. Stowe, Miss Alice Griswold and Miss McDowell.

The Convention was divided into four full Sessions, from 10 to 12 and from 2 to 4 each day, the programme being as follows:—

Tuesday, February 12, 7.30 p.m.—Meeting of the Council at the Boston City Hospital.

Wednesday, February 13, Morning Session, 10 to 12 o'clock.—Address of welcome by the President; Roll call; reading Minutes of the first Annual Meeting; Reports of the Officers and Committee. Afternoon Session, 2 to 4 o'clock—Papers: "Uniform Curriculum of Study for Training Schools," Miss Snively; "Three Years' Course of Training in Connection with Eight Hour System," Mrs. Hunter Robb, late Superintendent Johns Hopkins Training School. Discussion: Miss Davis, University Hospital, Philadelphia; Miss Walker, Presbyterian Hospital, Philadelphia, and others. "A Plan of Informing Training School Superintendents of Dismissed Pupil Nurses and Probationers," Miss Drown, Superintendent of Nurses, Boston City Hospital. Wednesday evening—Reception to the members of the Society given by the Trustees of the Boston City Hospital, from 8 to 10 o'clock.

Thursday, February 14, Morning Session, 10 to 12 o'clock.—Regular business. Papers: "Training School Alumnae Societies," Miss Palmer, late Superintendent Garfield Hospital. Afternoon Session, 2 to 4 o'clock—Papers: "Nurses' Directories," Miss Dock; "Comparative Value of Theory and Practice in Training Nurses," Miss Brennan. Discussion led by Miss Darche, Superintendent New York City Training School, Blackwell's Island.

After the Convention was called to order, the President read her address of welcome.

MISS LINDA RICHARDS' ADDRESS.

A little more than twenty years ago, in this city to which I now welcome you, I took charge of my first Training School. Many, indeed, are the changes which have taken place in the years that lie between that time and to-day; some very important changes, too. But perhaps none more marked than the change of feeling toward Training Schools and trained Nurses. Then it was an experimental work, and,

as such, was looked upon with suspicion. Very few believed that it would be a success; no class of people felt more strongly in the matter than did the medical profession. They firmly believed that the old way could not be improved upon, and they made no secret of their convictions. It has taken time to convince them that Training Schools are the greatest of blessings to Hospitals, and that the trained Nurse is quite as necessary as the physician. This change in feeling came slowly, but it has been thorough, and to-day no doctor feels like recalling his old-time prejudices with regard to trained Nurses and Training Schools, which have transformed Hospitals from the cheerless places they once were into peaceful, comfortable resting places for the sick poor, and have rendered the medical profession such valuable aid in their work of mercy to suffering humanity. Very hearty is the welcome extended to the members of this Association to-day from every Hospital and Training School in New England. Its organisation was hailed with delight. The meeting last year was an inspiration to all who attended, and each school feels honoured in having the second annual meeting held in this city. Shall we take time to compare the reception given you with that given me more than a score of years ago, and also the average school of to-day with my school as I found it then? It had been in existence one year; three wards of the Hospital had been given it that it might show the superiority (?) of its work; it was closely watched; each mistake duly noted; its good works were not mentioned—no, indeed. It had had during its first year two Superintendents, neither of whom had received training; both had had some practical experience; they did the best they could. But what woman without training can be expected to properly manage a Training School? Is it any wonder that at the end of a year the doctors pronounced Training Schools a failure, and wished to return to the old order of things? Such was the case, and so discouraging was the report given by them to the board of trustees, that they were in grave doubt concerning the wisdom of giving it a second year's trial. But when it was put to vote it was, by the overwhelming majority of one vote, allowed one more year of grace, provided a trained Nurse could be found to take it in charge. I was asked to come and help them, and did so. I came, not knowing into what I was coming. I was not met with outstretched hands of welcome; the doctors did not want me; the Nurses, who had framed their own rules and planned their own work, did not wish for a trained Superintendent who, very likely, would change their ways into those of her own; the trustees, with the exception of the president of the board, left me to myself. Shall I ever forget or cease to be thankful to him for taking pains to call upon me to express his faith in the work, and assure me of his willingness to render assistance in any way possible. The Training School committee were very kind indeed, and gave me all needed support, but my days—yes, and many of my nights (for I often acted as special night Nurse to trying cases)—were spent among those who wished me in any place but the one to which my duty called me; not a very pleasant picture to look back upon, and I seldom recall it, excepting for the purpose of contrasting it with the present.

The plan of the work in the wards was so unique that I will give a little sketch of the duties of one Nurse for five days. This will describe the duties of each, as it was a rotatory system. Nurse A, on Monday, had charge of the ward, attending to the duties of a head male Nurse; on Tuesday she had entire charge of the food for the ward, with the usual rounds, also of pantry, washing all dishes, &c.; Wednesday she attended to the general cleanliness of the ward and linen closet; Thursday she stood at the sink in the bathroom till noon and washed poultice clothes and bandages; in the afternoon she slept, and went on night duty Thursday night. Her hours, when on night duty, were supposed to be from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m., but she reported for duty when she felt like doing so, at any time before 10 p.m.; on Friday she rested, to be ready to start the round again on Saturday. The Nurses dearly loved this method, and bitter

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