

not, as you may imagine, in sympathy with the methods of the National Health Society, which institution takes ambulance pupils who have resided in an Infirmary for not more than six months, and allows these ladies to give public lectures on "First Aid to the Injured," Sick-Nursing and Hygiene. I do not think the benevolent ladies and gentlemen associated with the National Health Society are aware of the harm done in this particular. No doubt, like myself, they are connected with the Society on account of the good it does, and promises to do in other directions.

In a Society dependent upon public subscriptions, perhaps one hesitates to propose that these "training classes," as I believe they are called, should be abandoned, because the National Health Society would lose a large revenue paid in the fees of these ladies, who hope thereby to become lecturers under County Councils and other bodies.

Moreover, it is only human to understand that the medical men on the Committee of management, who themselves give these lectures, would not easily be brought to understand that as a method of training in the art of Nursing, such lectures are inadequate and misleading.

Hence things remain as they are with regard to "lecture-trained" lecturers. But as a Member of the National Health Society—who, has however, no voice in its management—I should like to know more than has been told us before the institution of lecture-trained "Health Sisters" has become an accepted fact.

Is it fair, I should like to ask—and no doubt the same idea has occurred to many others—is it fair to take the guineas—working women have not, as a rule, many guineas to spare—for fees from these ladies, in return for courses of lectures on Hygiene which shall qualify them for the post of "Health Sister," while there is not yet the least possible sign of an opening for such workers?

The most richly-endowed parish in Great Britain has no fund out of which they could pay the salary of an Amateur Sanitary Inspector, and that in plain words is what the "Health Sister" would really be, only her position would be more difficult for herself; and less acceptable to those she worked amongst, because she would have no legal power of entry into the dwellings of the people, and no authority to carry out any reform to their advantage.

It would, I fear, be an anomalous and impossible position for a stranger in the place. Only a Lady Bountiful, or a popular parish worker, or district visitor, could make recommendations for open windows, pure water and cleaner habits tolerated by the masses.

I do not think the incident mentioned at Grosvenor House, by Dr. Schofield, of the lady in Brighton who asked for such a "Health Sister" to come and reside with her till she could have acquired sufficient hints and information, points to any wide-spread desire on the part of working-class households to have the wholesomeness of their homes overseered by a strange lecture-trained teacher sent into their midst. I have myself worked a good deal amongst the poor, and much as it is to be regretted, it is not right to ignore the fact that there is no opening as yet amongst them for such "Health Sisters" as it is suggested shall be flooded on the labour market. Nor is there any fund out of which such workers could be paid.

I believe that lady in Brighton who appealed to Dr. Schofield is an exceptional person. Perhaps she was flattering the worthy doctor; she knew that he

was a teacher of Hygiene—in fact I myself assumed from what he said at Grosvenor House, that it was his pet hobby; and no doubt she thought it was a pleasant thing to say to him. But I do not hesitate to say that not many ladies, heads of households, would allow a lecture-crammed young person to come on a visit to their homes, and then give her *carte-blanche* to put the house in hygienic order. To clear out all dust-holding furniture, nailed-down carpets, dust-collecting ornaments and the like. To insist that the new arsenically tinted wall papers should be torn down and paint or lime-wash substituted. To institute ventilators in all the rooms, even the bed-rooms. To suggest as breakfast dishes, oatmeal porridge and stewed fruit with cocoa and diluted milk, in place of the accepted dishes, and to taboo altogether hot rolls, kidneys, and strong tea and coffee. No! I am glad to believe that we are all beginning slowly to learn the rudiments of Health Teaching, but I do not think there are many ladies who would invite a "Health Sister" to come on a visit to reform her house and her household ways.

Is it quite fair then, I ask again, to encourage certain poor ladies to pay heavy fees for courses of Hygiene lectures, in order that they may be trained for posts that are not yet made, nor are likely to be made, and which if they were made, there would be no remuneration attached to?

Faithfully yours,

NATIONAL HEALTH REFORMER.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I read of the suggestion made by Dr. Schofield at Grosvenor House, to extend hygienic knowledge in the country by means of "Health Sisters," with some interest, and I was specially glad to observe that these ladies were not to pose as trained Nurses, by adopting the uniform of professional women. My experience of trained Nurses leads me to believe that their knowledge of the *laws of health* is very superficial indeed, and that a cloak and bonnet—or cap and apron as the case may be—by no means denotes that the wearer has any knowledge whatever of hygiene. Ask the majority of trained Nurses a few simple questions on systems of drainage, ventilation, water supply, &c., and nine out of ten cannot give the requisite information. As an outsider, and one who knows something of sanitation, may I ask why Hygiene and Dietetics are excluded from the school curriculums of so many of our Nurse-training Schools? they appear to me to be the very foundation of a sound education for trained Nurses, and are, I find, given prominence in the class teaching in connection with the curriculum of the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow—the pioneer school in Great Britain of Preliminary Education for Nurses. Surely trained Nurses before everything should be "Health Sisters," and it is much to be deplored that the present system of training does not include a thorough elementary course of teaching concerning these important matters.

Yours faithfully,

A COUNTY COUNCIL LECTURER.

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