

some circulars of Nurses' wages, one might think it. They are really, however, educational Institutions, and it is time that this fact be better appreciated. It should not be forgotten that the long hours of duty in the wards may reduce pupils to a condition of servitude. It is not for the purpose of giving them more and better training that they are kept on duty so long, but rather that the amount of service rendered to the Hospital may be increased, that the working force of the Institution may, for economy's sake, be kept small. These long hours frequently render it impossible for a Nurse to profit by the teaching for which her services are supposed to be given; and with such long hours the teaching is merely offered as an advantage to attract applicants, and is not deserving of any serious consideration.

What we should do, and what if we fail to do, others who come after us will do, is to open our eyes and minds to the actual state of things about us. Let us look into the matter and satisfy ourselves as to the fair amount of physical labour required for the necessary training, and which can be done without over-fatigue, and without infringing upon other duties. Let us plan out a suitable amount of mental work, and give our pupils time to do it thoroughly, and see to it that they are in a condition physically to do so. Let us give time for a proper amount of healthful exercise and diversion, that spirit and enthusiasm, and the "merry heart which doeth good like a medicine," may not be utterly lacking. Finally, let us provide the needful time for sleep. In summing it up let us include:—

First.—The number of hours on duty in the wards.

Second.—The number of hours taken up with class or lecture, and

Third.—The amount of time expected or necessary to be devoted daily to study, and calculate how much time each day, or even in a week (under the most favourable circumstances and conditions), can be secured for necessary rest and healthful diversion.

The following conclusions are inevitable:—

First.—The working hours in the wards being but a portion of the day's work, are now in almost all Hospitals too long; they should be so arranged as under no circumstances to exceed 9 hours, and should, when possible, be limited to 8 hours.

Second.—That the hours set apart for rest and recreation are now necessarily and frequently infringed upon by class, lecture or study, in order that the pupil may perform the work required of her. This should in no case be done, but these hours should be reserved for the purposes for which they were intended.

Third.—Where an increase in the theoretical course of instruction becomes necessary or advisable, it should, on adoption, be followed by a certain corresponding decrease in the amount of practical work required, and if necessary an increase in the total length of the period of training.

The explanation of the origin of the preposterously long hours of service quoted in this report exists in the fact that, as a rule, provision has not been made for a sufficient number of pupil Nurses. Such attempts at economy in Hospital administration are unwise and injurious, both to the Nurses and patients, and cannot be too strongly condemned. Having been requested to prepare a statistical report, I do not feel at liberty to comment at length upon the existing order of things, but I cannot refrain from saying that I think the time has come for us to look these matters fairly in the face, and to see whether or not we are dealing justly by those women whom we propose to send out into the world, not only to care for the sick, but, by influence, teaching, and example, to represent the value of our training. If in these women strength, health, and spirit be lacking, even with all the teaching and training we have given, and with whatever skill we have been able to endow them, can they be other than pitiful commentaries, either on our ignorance, or on our short-sighted policy in failing to guard all the interests entrusted to our care?

If we are turning out, yearly, hundreds of Nurses who ultimately do mediocre work in a weary and spiritless fashion, Nurses who have to take a rest after every third patient, women who seem, as we say literally, "used up and worn out," can we hold ourselves blameless?

In conclusion, I would take this opportunity of thanking all those Superintendents who, by their prompt and courteous responses to my request for information, have assisted me in preparing this report.

Children's Fresh Air Mission.

ONE of the most deserving of charities is the Children's Fresh Air Mission. By arrangement with the Children's Country Holidays Fund the children sent by this society are selected chiefly from the crowded neighbourhoods of Holborn, Clerkenwell, and St. Luke's. One can easily understand how great a boon a fortnight's enjoyment of fresh country air and country sights and sounds must be to children living in such a district. The short visit to the country produces a great change, often so improving the health of weakly children that they become permanently strong. Subscriptions and donations should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Walter Hazell, Esq., M.P., St. Peter's Schools, Onslow-street, Clerkenwell-road, E.C."

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