

as to the ethics and practice of Nursing as well as the education of our Nurses being identical.

On both sides of the ocean the leaders of the Nursing world have the one desire to raise the standard of education for Nurses and maintain a high moral tone; both as Nurse and Matron, from what I have seen, I regret that the latter has not always been present either in the public or private Hospitals, but it is steadily improving; in the former of these, things are not as they were some years ago. It is harder to find out the tone of a woman's mind when hedged in by the discipline and rules of public Hospital life than when she is emancipated and comes out in her true colours in a private Hospital or in Nursing quite on her own account. Very often then Matrons get painful surprises in quarters least expected. I think nowhere do Nurses deteriorate more, if their *morale* of Nursing is not of the soundest, than in a private Hospital, where the principal, though a (professedly) trained Nurse, cares for little else than her profits. There are, I regret to say, not a few such private Hospitals in Melbourne. There are one or two where good Nursing is really given, and where the Nurses are trained women, not so-called probationers, who have most likely never been inside a general Hospital to learn anything of their work as Nurses.

The education of Nurses in Victoria is of course in its infancy, and not to be compared with that of the English Nurse Training Schools, though some most excellent Nurses have been trained during the last few years. The Alfred Hospital for a long time was, in the point of technical education, in the lead, and is still, and also as to having the higher class of women who took up Nursing; but until five years ago it was the custom there for a pupil to complete her training and receive her certificate in one year. Then the two-year system was adopted, with, I need hardly say, much more satisfactory results; during this period they also had the advantage of having weekly classes from their Matron as well as from the doctors during the two lecture terms in the year.

The lectures from the doctors were on elementary anatomy and physiology, and Medical and Surgical Nursing with demonstrations. The Matron's classes were on the ethics of Nursing, observation of the sick, and practical Nursing. She also taught the bandaging. The examinations followed closely on the termination of the courses of lectures.

The system of education was regular, and the Nurses could form an idea of how to study for it. The three years' system of training was adopted at the Alfred Hospital in 1895.

It is more difficult to describe the mode of education of the Melbourne Hospital Nursing School, for, though the Nursing is thoroughly well done, technical education seems decidedly to have been kept in the background; perhaps this was owing to the numbers of pupils who were not sufficiently educated to profit by the higher education now thought necessary, but, as all things in these days are advancing, we will hope a new and better system will prevail in the near future at the Melbourne Hospital.

It is always a mistake to have on any Nursing staff women whose education is so limited that writing with facility is an impossibility, and that ordinary conversational English is beyond their comprehension; but at the present day there are still some such pupils training in our Hospitals out here.

The Homœopathic Hospital follows up a system of teaching not unlike "The Alfred," and some of its trained Nurses have brought much credit on their Hospital when they have gone home to England. Certainly nothing could look more charming than its small, picturesque and beautifully-kept wards. There is one great defect in all the teaching I have heard in the Colonies—that is in the absolute silence, during a course of Nursing lectures on the subjects of hygiene and ventilation, or that they were very lightly touched upon. Neither of these things finds a very ready acceptance in the colonial mind generally. There are, of course, exceptions; but the prevailing idea on ventilation is, that when the temperature is high, open the windows; at other times keep them closed, especially at night; and, though the Hospitals are liberally supplied with means of ventilation, in some of them fresh air in some wards is conspicuous by its absence. I always attribute this to deficiency in the head Nurse or Sister's early training, and the subject not having been made of sufficient importance to her.

The payment of the Sisters, Staff Nurses, and Pupils, is certainly not large. A Night Superintendent gets £60; Sisters from £40 to over £50; Staff Nurses, £35. Melbourne Hospital pupils receive payment from the beginning, £15 first year, two next years £20 a year and indoor uniform, outdoor uniform optional and provided by themselves. The Alfred Hospital gives a salary after six months; the second six months £9, and the two following years £20 and £24; no uniform supplied. The Homœopathic and Children's Hospitals give no pay for a year; the former then gives a good deal less salary than the other Hospitals just mentioned. "The Women's" Hospital gives to pupils in the Midwifery Department neither payment nor uniform during a year's training. Their regular Staff have fair salaries, about the same as the other Hospitals. I certainly think £40 a year is too little for the work and responsibility of a Sister in charge.

It is a peculiarity in Australia that when economy is the order of the day the *officials who work hardest* are the people who have the increased burden of reduced salaries put upon them, and the first cry is to reduce the salaries instead of looking to find leakages from waste or some other unnecessary expense that could be curtailed. There is one most false economy existing in some of the Hospitals here, too, *i.e.*, the short holiday given to their Matrons and Nurses—two weeks annually. The shortsightedness of this is shown in the frequent, and in some instances long, sick leaves necessary to recruit from illnesses which could have been avoided by an additional week's country air. The Alfred Hospital gives once a week twenty-four hours off duty to its Nurses, and two weeks' holiday annually to each of its Staff from the Matron downwards. The Melbourne Hospital Committee, at the Matron's suggestion, have sanctioned their Nursing staff having a whole day off weekly, and three weeks' annual holiday instead of two. The other Hospitals give two weeks. The food supplied to all the Nursing staff, as far as I have seen and heard, is good and abundant."

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