

One more story is well worth quoting from this amusing article. It relates to yet another Scotchman, the famous Dr. George Fordyce:—

Unfortunately he was given to drink, and though he never was known to be dead drunk, yet he was often in a state which rendered him unfit for professional duties. One night when he was in such a condition, he was suddenly sent for to attend a lady of title, who was very ill. He went, sat down, listened to her story, and felt her pulse. He found he was not up to his work; he lost his wits, and in a moment of forgetfulness exclaimed: "Drunk, by Jove!" Still, he managed to write out a mild prescription. Early next morning he received a message from his noble patient to call on her at once. Dr. Fordyce felt very uncomfortable. The Lady evidently intended to upbraid him either with an improper prescription or with his disgraceful condition. But to his surprise and relief she thanked him for his prompt compliance with her pressing summons, and then confessed that he had rightly diagnosed her case, that unfortunately she occasionally indulged too freely in drink, but that she hoped he would preserve inviolable secrecy as to the condition he had found her in. Fordyce listened to her as grave as a judge, and said: "You may depend upon me, madam; I shall be as silent as the grave."

Our Letter from Holland.

THE SIXTH GENERAL MEETING OF THE
DUTCH NURSING ASSOCIATION.

JULY 10TH, 1899.



THE General Annual Meeting of the Dutch Nursing Association has been held this year at Arnhem, the beautiful city on the Rhine, situated in one

of the most picturesque parts of our country. The choosing of Arnhem for the place of meeting was due to the great attraction issuing from the Historical Medical Exhibition, held in the above-mentioned town in honour of the Golden Jubilee of the Dutch Association for furthering Medical Science—a most remarkable exhibition, giving a plastic representation of the progress made in the last fifty years in the field of sick nursing and public hygiene. The retrospective section is also of the highest interest, and it may be called a happy idea of the Board of Management of the Dutch Nursing Association when fixing the capital of Guelders as the place of meeting to give all those who attended the assembly an opportunity of visiting the exhibition as instructive for the lay world as for professional men and women.

The sixth general meeting of the Dutch Nursing Association was opened by the chairman, Dr. J. Kniper, who referred to all the "Bond" has done in the past year. The influence issuing from its enquete and the results of the special meeting, held in May, 1898, are manifesting themselves in a prolongation of the holiday time of the nurses and relief of labour in several hospitals and similar institutions. He pro-

tested against the system of an eight months' training, such as is applied in *la Source* at Lausanne, in Switzerland, and recommended by a well-known Dutch author, Johanna van Woude, who says in her book on this subject:—"A woman who desires to get a general knowledge of sick-nursing in a short space of time must go to *la Source*." "We all know," the chairman continued, "what such a *general knowledge* means: it is just enough to make a nurse believe that she has a right of expressing a fixed opinion. The patients, however, are not served by words, but by deeds. A pupil nurse may learn a great deal of theory in eight months, but it is an impossibility that the practice of nursing should be learned thoroughly in so short a time. The author of the letter quoted by Johanna van Woude most justly does not think it probable that a nurse would be appointed as such in a Dutch hospital upon the authority of a *Source* certificate, and I should like to add to it, at least not as a nurse, but as a probationer, in order to finish her training. The author of the letter, however, knows better; the nurse certified by *la Source* may become a private nurse, or engaged to a private clinic, of course. This, "of course," at the end of the phrase is highly eloquent, and full of meaning. We all know, when speaking of private nurses, how much chaff there is among the wheat: whoever likes may become a private nurse."

The chairman expressed his most ardent wish that the Dutch private clinics would not prove themselves asylums for nurses with an eight months' training, at least, when they assume to be something more than pupil nurses. The Dutch Nursing Association, he said, at the end of his speech, aims at a sound and thorough training, a three years' training in a general hospital. It is only in this way that the standard of nursing can be raised. We must keep faith with those principles which experience has taught us are right.

The Hon. Secretary-treasurer, Lady De Bosch Kemper, read her annual report, and informed the assembly of the fact that the Dutch Nursing Association has published a book containing the curriculum of the different hospitals and institutions giving certificates for sick nursing to all those who desire to pass the examination. For the rest there was not very much new to tell. The report was for a part a reiteration of those of preceding years. The state of the finances may be called very satisfactory.

Dr. J. A. Wijnhoff and Dr. P. J. Barnouw, resigning members of the Board of Management, were substituted by Dr. van der Weyde and Dr. Rombach.

After this the chairman brought the following proposal before the assembly: "The Board of Management asks from the general meeting a credit of one thousand florins (about £83) to be disposed of on behalf of nurses."

In answer to the question put by the chairman, whether any of those assembled had anything to remark concerning this proposal, the Lady Superintendent of one of our leading hospitals suggested that the Board of Management should give an opportunity to nurses, members of the "Bond," to attend lectures on sick nursing, as an aid to memory and a complement to the practical and theoretical knowledge already acquired by them. These suggested lectures, however, should not be limited strictly to nursing subjects. She thought the discussing of social matters also very instructive and edifying for nurses, and the Dutch Nursing Association would do a noble work if they widened in this way the intellectual horizon of our nurses.

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