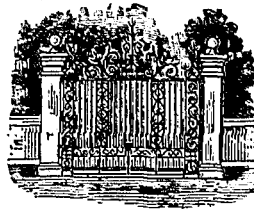


elementary anatomy, physiology, and hygiene, together with experience of dusting, bedmaking, and other domestic work." After referring to the preliminary training schools organized by the authorities of the London Hospital, and the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, the authors go on to say, "A better plan, perhaps, would be a central training home, where each hospital could choose its own probationers from among those who had attained its standard of preliminary knowledge as proved by examination. When this preliminary training becomes more general it will lessen to a great extent the influx of unsuitable women into the wards, and will, therefore, materially increase the efficiency and usefulness of the nursing staff." This is, we believe, the first time that the establishment of a central preliminary training school has been advocated in any manual on nursing, but there is no doubt that it will form part of the scheme of nursing education in the future—we hope, in the near future. From the numbers eliminated before they enter the hospital, in those preliminary schools already established, it is evident that many women are accepted on trial who prove, for one reason or another, unsuitable as probationers. It is surely right that their unfitness should be discovered before they enter the wards, and are allowed to wait on the patients. The comfort of the sick would, we believe, be greatly increased, and, we may add, the tempers of busy ward-sisters and staff nurses would be saved much trial if only probationers whose qualifications had been tested were sent on duty. Moreover, in the preliminary training school the new probationer would have been taught something of the elements of nursing, and thus would immediately begin to be of use. In the case of great training schools it may be possible to establish preliminary homes for the pupils, but, in the smaller hospitals such a scheme could not be carried out. The first element in its success, the discipline only to be obtained in perfection where there are numbers, would be missing. For this and other reasons therefore a central preliminary training school seems essential; further it would undoubtedly bring us a step nearer to the uniform curriculum which so many Matrons desire. We hope now that the necessity for a preliminary training school has been publicly advocated by so high an authority as the Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital that we are appreciably nearer this consummation devoutly to be wished. Again, the qualities described as essential in a nurse are observation, obedience, punctuality, cleanliness, and accuracy. We notice it is insisted that "obedience is the first duty of a nurse, and the best test of her training," and again, "In a hospital, where the services of a resident staff are always at hand, obedience should be absolute and unquestioning. A mental habit is thus formed, the power of which is never quite lost." Undoubtedly where nurse training reaches its highest perfection this absolute obedience to medical orders is invariably emphasised. It is the semi-trained undisciplined woman who assumes the responsibility which does not belong to her. At the close of her term of training the nurse is, in the opinion of the authors, a very different woman from the candidate who entered three years previously. She is either more intelligent, sympathetic, and unselfish, or she has become dull, mechanical, and self-absorbed. This view will be borne out by many.

(To be continued.)

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS.



THE Sectional Meeting for women proved far more interesting than the Mass Meeting, in point of the importance of what was said. But it is impossible to mention the meeting without also mentioning the fact that it was almost a miracle of mismanagement, a fact for which the ladies who arranged it were by no means responsible. The men were demonstrating in mass in the great hall, and the women were relegated to the little Albert Hall Theatre, of the very existence of which most people are ignorant. It was absurdly small for the purpose, and no instructions whatever had been given as to the proper entrance, or way to arrive there.

At a few minutes before seven, when we arrived, there was a little crowd of women at most doors. We had carefully enquired the day before, as to how to get in, and had been officially told to go to the main entrance and go up in the lift. This we were not allowed to do. When the doors opened, the ladies were all driven from the door at which we stood and sent to the next. Here, as at all doors, was a crowd of both sexes, and at this door the men were refused admittance. As no notice of any kind to this effect had been displayed, the men got in by force, in some natural irritation, and for a few moments there was some rough pushing. Up the gallery stairs we sped as soon as we were inside, and by five minutes past seven there was not standing room in the little theatre, while the lack of atmosphere threatened asphyxia. By circulating a written message on a scrap of paper, we succeeded in getting some windows open, and sat for the best part of an hour staring at an entirely void platform, and listening to the loud murmurs of the hundreds of ladies who were not able to get in.

At a quarter to eight the authorities had an inspiration. They realized that at a meeting you require a table and chairs on the platform. These were, accordingly, carried in, over the heads of the crowds of unfortunates thronging the gangways. Then Mrs. Creighton appeared to say she had disposed of the overflow meeting in the Church Army tent. Without a bell, or water, or any such luxury, the meeting then began.

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