

just outside the gates of the present hospital buildings.

Passing through the many and varied vicissitudes which befell the religious and charitable institutions of early times, and receiving royal support in the reign of King Henry VIII., who refounded the Hospital, it gradually became what it is at the present time, one of the first schools of medicine in the kingdom, and, what is of more importance to us to-day, one of the great training schools for English nurses.

If imitation be the sincerest form of flattery, the Alumnae Associations in this country may feel duly flattered, for it was, I think, the knowledge of their existence which, to some extent at least, suggested to our founder and president, Miss Isla Stewart, the possibility of the formation of an association which would offer similar advantages to its members.

The need of such an association had made itself felt for a considerable period before any definite plan could be entered upon.

In the natural course of events, nurses who have enjoyed the security and protection of a life lived in common, during the years of their training, pass on to other work, and other responsibilities.

No definite bond existed between them and the many friends and companions of their old school with whom the difficulties and the pleasures of hospital life had been shared.

True, the bond of memory was the possession of all who might desire it, but it was neither a substantial nor a very satisfactory one.

Letters and meetings might be arranged between individuals, but such a busy body of workers found ever-increasing difficulty in keeping up with old friends and their doings.

A visit to the Hospital was equally unsatisfactory; to be greeted as a stranger, almost as an interloper, by the new generation of workers, was the occasional experience of any who ventured to revisit the familiar scenes.

This is but one aspect of the need which indicated the necessity of an association to unite old friends and new in perpetuity.

In connection with our profession, there arise from time to time many points of great and vital importance to us as a whole.

An opportunity of mutual discussion and a friendly interchange of opinion is an advantage of no small moment.

With the possibility of offering these and other advantages, Miss Isla Stewart, with her usual spirit of enterprise and esprit de corps, called a provisional committee to discuss the formation of an association similar to those in this country.

Warmly supported by the members of this

committee, who hailed her suggestion with much eagerness, invitations were issued to all nurses holding the hospital certificate or diploma, to join a League for their mutual help, support, and pleasure. With gratifying alacrity applications for membership poured in from all parts of the Kingdom, or wherever St. Bartholomew's nurses were working or residing.

In due course an executive committee was formed, bye-laws were drawn up, a badge was suggested, and a design for the same prepared and accepted; a benevolent scheme was outlined; half-yearly meetings were arranged, providing opportunities for the discussion of all business matters and for pleasant social intercourse.

It was also arranged that the doings of League members, together with their names and addresses, should be duly chronicled in a small half-yearly issue to be entitled the "League News." Each number contains an interesting editorial, touching on current events of general interest, in addition to papers on special subjects, and as comprehensive a list as possible of the honours achieved by any members of the League. Our first general meeting took place in the Great Hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in May, 1900. It was an enthusiastic and representative gathering, and Miss Stewart was justly proud of the fulfilment of her long-cherished scheme.

We now number nearly 400 members, increasing steadily as each six months produces more nurses eligible for membership. Amongst these we are proud to claim no fewer than five members who are working in this country at the present moment.

The Retirement of Miss Lumsden

The retirement of Miss Katherine M. Lumsden, the Lady Superintendent of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Aberdeen, has caused much regret both upon the part of the Directors and also of the nursing staff. Miss Lumsden has been closely connected with the hospital since 1877. First in association with her sister, Miss Rachel Lumsden, the first Superintendent, and since 1885 as Hon. Superintendent. She has been constantly active in her efforts to promote the welfare of the hospital, and has been instrumental in raising funds for the erection of additional buildings in connection with the institution, and also of a much needed Nurses' Home. Miss Lumsden is not entirely severing her connection with the hospital, as she will still retain the superintendence of a scheme which she inaugurated for a house-to-house collection on its behalf in the town and country, which has proved a steady and increasing source of income.

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