

de corps. There are now four homes established in Liverpool and forty-one nurses, the Central Home, newly opened, being a model of convenience for the work. The success of the system of district nursing in Liverpool stimulated the work in other places, and in several large towns nurses were provided for the sick poor.

It appears strange to us that at that comparatively recent date the greatest obstacle lay, not, as might have been expected, in the want of supporters for such a novel scheme, and, in consequence, want of funds, but in the extreme difficulty of obtaining the necessary nurses. It seems almost incredible that sober, trustworthy women, with nursing experience, were hardly to be found for this work. I may quote on this point from Mr. W. Rathbone's "Sketch of the History and Progress of District Nursing," to which this paper is already greatly indebted: "As a step towards the improvement of the nursing standard, the matron of the Royal Infirmary in Liverpool had been empowered to pay a salary of £16 to any nurse who deserved it. The salary was certainly not an exorbitant one, and yet no more than four nurses could be found worthy to receive it. Any ordinary nurse of that time, if paid more than the usual salary of £10, would most probably have incurred dismissal for drunkenness after the first quarter-day." In thus tracing this work from its origin we realize the enormous strides made by the nursing profession since Miss Nightingale founded the Training-School for Nurses at St. Thomas's Hospital in 1860.

The first of the societies organized for the sole benefit of the poor in London was the "East London Nursing Society," founded in 1868. It attains its object by placing a trained nurse in each parish and supplying fully trained nursing superintendence; there is also an efficient plan for the supply of necessary diet and comforts for the patients. There are now three homes in East London, accommodating most of the thirty-three nurses who work there; the rest still live in lodgings. The society is affiliated to the Queen's Institute.

A new development which led to the foundation of the Metropolitan and National Nursing Association in 1874 gave a fresh impetus to district nursing. The movement was initiated by the Council of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and the objects of the association were as follows:

1. To train and provide a body of skilled nurses to nurse the sick poor in their own homes.
2. To establish in the metropolis and to assist in establishing in the country district organizations for this purpose.
3. To establish a training-school for district nurses in connection with one of the London hospitals.
4. To raise by all means in its power the

standard of nursing and the social position of nurses.

The great departure in this scheme was the employment of nurses drawn from the ranks of educated women, due to the suggestion of the first superintendent, Miss Florence Lees, now Mrs. Dacre Craven.

In her own words: "There were several grounds for this decision, and these were chiefly that, in nursing the poor in their own homes, nurses were placed in positions of greater responsibility in carrying out doctors' orders than in hospitals; that women of education would be more capable of exercising such responsibility; that the vocation would attract women anxious for independent employment, and a corps of nurses recruited altogether among educated women would have a greater influence over the patients, and by their higher social position would tend to raise the whole body of professional nurses in the consideration of the public."

Such an innovation was not considered practical by those most interested in the movement, even Miss Nightingale saying, "I don't believe you will find it answer, but *try* it, try it for a year." The result, however, fully justified the experiment, and the high standard thus established has exercised its influence over the whole development of the work.

It was resolved to adopt the principle that the nurses should live together in homes under trained district superintendents, and a central home was established. From this centre several homes were rapidly started, and by 1887 there were nine established in London on these lines, besides several in the country.

It remained, however, for Queen Victoria, by the institution of "The Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses," to consolidate the work of district nursing, and to raise it from the sphere of individual effort to become a great national institution. Queen Victoria realized the great benefits arising from this work, which had been quietly making its way among the humblest of her subjects. With that keen insight into the merits of a debated question which was one of her attributes, she decided to devote the bulk of the subscription raised by the women of England as a gift to her Majesty on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth year of her reign, some £70,000 to this comparatively unknown object, rather than to bestow it on some already established charity. In 1888 her Majesty approved a scheme for connecting the Jubilee Institute with the ancient charity of St. Katharine's Hospital.

In order to obtain the interest and support of local institutions, of which there were many already existing in the large towns, conditions of affiliation with the Queen's Institute were drawn up. These were at once accepted by the Liverpool Association, with others, and now there are

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