

nurses for the treatment of the mentally afflicted who needed nursing, the hospital being also used for the training of the new nurses. And here comes in Mrs. Findlay's work. She was already in charge of our little 'sick-room,' and I was firmly convinced by the way she discharged her duties there that she would enter fully into the general idea of the new hospital. This she at once realised very fully, and carried out the medical intention that each woman there was a patient labouring under a disease to be nursed and treated. This idea, I assure you, was not then universally prevalent. Mrs. Findlay's success in her work, the way in which she both nursed and superintended the nursing of poor sick women and trained our new nurses, has made this idea take possession of the treatment of the whole of the insane in the country. I am quite sure if my friends, Sir Arthur Mitchell and Sir John Sibbald, were here they would back me up in this very strong statement that Mrs. Findlay's success in an ordinary hospital building, her demonstration that this was a possible thing, and not only possible, but an advance on the whole treatment of the mentally afflicted, was one of the reasons why the Commissioners in Lunacy took up the 'hospital' idea, so that now there is not an institution without such a means of treatment. . . . Now the thorough success of Morningside Hospital Section and its adoption elsewhere, and the general amelioration that one feels has thereby taken place in the treatment of the mentally afflicted, is a thing to be proud of and grateful for."

The conditions of the service in asylums in Great Britain give cause for some reflection. The continual changing of the staff which arises from dissatisfaction with the secluded character of the life in institutions, combined with the abnormally long hours of duty, together with an inadequate scale of remuneration, is a feature in asylum nursing which needs careful study. The restrictions enforced ten years ago are now felt to be out of place. There has arisen a demand for greater freedom on the part of the staff, and the expression of a desire for wider opportunities for recreation, a need which can only be met by an extension of holidays and a lessening of the hours of duty. If a high state of efficiency is ever to be gained in the nursing of the mentally afflicted, it can only be by maintaining a state of permanency among the staff able to supply the result of years of experience to meet the exigencies which so often arise in the wards in a manifold variety.

This perpetual ebb and flow among the personnel of the staffs of our asylums has been noted by the Commissioners in Lunacy, and the attention of the ruling authorities of our asylums has been drawn to the fact, and it has been suggested that some determined effort should be made, to render the service in our asylums more attractive,

both financially and socially. At present there is no guaranteed pension for service in the county asylums\* of England and Wales, but there is being made a representative effort to promote legislation to attain this end, and so place the asylum nurse upon the same basis as other branches of the civil service of the Kingdom.

In this respect there is a difference between hospital and asylum nursing. There exists a greater need for recreation in the latter. Companionship with demented has a most depressing effect and requires vigorous counteraction to ward off injurious results, while the nervous strain entailed in the care of acute cases of insanity ultimately in a few years reacts upon the nurse and causes a general breakdown unless the motto of "mens sana in corpore sano" is carefully regarded. A true appreciation of this statement can only be gained by those who have had actual experience of the inner life of our asylums and the excessively trying conditions which often exist therein. The effort to maintain a healthy physical tone among the staff of our asylums should meet with every encouragement from the managers of these institutions. A low state of health diminishes the efficiency of the nurse, and the work consequently suffers. However, we may regard it, due consideration of the needs of the staff promotes both the medical and economic interests of our asylums. There is expressed a general desire to raise the status and qualifications of the asylum nurse, and some progress in this respect has been made. This can be further advanced by careful selection of candidates. On the whole, it is probable there is better material from which to select female nurses than male. Wider spheres of work for men have a great deal to do with this condition of things, but for those who elect to remain in the service the same course of instruction and training is open as is available to the female nurse, and a man of good character holding the medico-psychological certificate will readily find employment either in an asylum or with a private case. A good moral character is the foundation upon which the successful training of the nurse rests. Asylum nursing makes severe demands on moral qualities of character. Tact, power of self-control, sympathy, and quick perceptive powers are all needed.

On the authority of Dr. Spence, writing in the *Journal of Mental Science* in 1899, it may be stated that there is no wide difference existing between the conditions of asylum nursing in England and in America. The development in recent years in America has acted as a stimulus upon the asylums of England, and the facilities for the interchange of ideas which now exist will promote progress in every direction.

Asylums under the management of the various County Councils.

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