

Miss Stewart desired to add that she had no power to dismiss a nurse herself. She could only suspend a nurse, and lay the matter before the next meeting of the weekly Committee.

Miss Stewart emphasised the fact that in a proper training-school a nurse was subject to two distinct kinds of discipline—the official discipline of ward and home rules, of her daily work, and the continual suppression of herself and of obedience to others which the work entailed; and, secondly, there was the discipline of the nurses' home, living on equal terms with many differing personalities, each possessing equal rights and privileges. These two disciplines naturally exercised a great and lasting effect on the character of nurses, and Miss Stewart contended that those women who had undergone such discipline for three years became well qualified to cope with the many difficulties of their calling and to conduct themselves with tact and discrimination; that, in fact, such discipline cultivates the personal and womanly qualities which everyone knows to be so valuable in a nurse; and she maintained that anyone who had passed through such discipline for three years successfully must have acquired such qualities in greater or less perfection.

The witness called attention to the fact that at present when a nurse has finished her training and obtained her certificate she becomes a free agent, and is under no professional control or supervision at all, even if she offends against the law. The training-schools could not alter that; they could not control or supervise a nurse after she had left their service. They had awarded her a certificate for manual dexterity, theoretical knowledge, and good behaviour, and had no power to withdraw that certificate or to cancel it for any subsequent misdemeanour on the part of the nurse. The only method of meeting this difficulty was by the establishment of a central nursing authority which would formulate a uniform system of education and common rules of discipline, and which would be able to purify the nursing ranks of women who were proved guilty of grave offences. Miss Stewart thought that there was not so much need for reform in the large London and county hospitals, so far as their educational methods went, as in the smaller institutions; but whether they were small or large, and whatever their methods, they all gave a certificate or testimonial which enabled the nurse to call herself fully trained. The public, in fact, had no protection of any sort against ignorant or inefficient nurses. Miss Stewart emphasised the fact that only a central nursing body could define and enforce a uniform system of education and certification, and that it would create endless jealousies if some hospitals could grant certificates and others could not do so; in fact, it would be most difficult to draw the line between them. She agreed that there would be difficulties, of course, but felt sure that a central nursing body would be able to meet such difficulties successfully. With regard to the age of entry, she considered that it might with advantage be lowered, and she thought that the nurses who obtained a thoroughly efficient education should be required to pay towards its cost either by giving their time to the hospital or by paying some fees.

Miss MARGARET HUXLEY was next called, and corroborated Miss Stewart's evidence as to the urgent need for greater uniformity in the training of nurses. She had been Matron and Superintendent of Nurses at

Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, for eighteen years, and had seen the injustice which could be caused to nurses by reason of the present methods of training. For example, at that hospital a nurse was trained for two years in the wards, and was then required to go out private nursing and earn money for the hospital; but if the nurse, after leaving the hospital, wished to join the Army Nursing Corps, she was told that she was ineligible because she had not had three years' work in the wards. At present, the Army Nursing Board could demand three years, and hospitals need only give their nurses one year or two years' training. Nothing could alter such arrangements until a central nursing authority definitely settled what term of training a nurse should undergo before being certificated. The central nursing body should be composed of experts, which the lay committees of hospitals were not; for only experts could draw up and define what the educational curriculum should be, and only such a body could appoint examiners to ascertain that the nurse had obtained the necessary skill in, and knowledge of, her work. Every nurse must be trained in a hospital, and she considered that three years was the minimum period. She did not agree that a quick and clever woman should be allowed to go up for examination sooner than a stupid woman, because she did not believe that proper training could be quick. It really meant constant experience in the actual performance of nursing work. She pointed out that the nurse must have technical knowledge in order to obtain the full value of such technical experience. A clever woman would obtain knowledge quicker than a stupid one, but she could not gain the experience any quicker. For example, typhoid fever and rheumatic fever ran a definite course. You could not hurry illnesses, and a clever woman would have to nurse a patient just as long as a stupid woman in order to gain the necessary experience of the nursing required. She described the kind of examination in practical and theoretical nursing which she thought a nurse should undergo before certification. She did not think it so much necessary to alter the education given at the big hospitals as to level up the others to their standard. She thought that probably 2,000 nurses would be required each year to make up for wastage by death or retirement from the calling. She did not believe that it would be any more expensive to hospitals to give a thorough education to the nurses, and she thought there would be no objection to nurses paying something for their training. She thought that the nurses might be admitted younger than at present, and that there should be a minimum age of twenty-one before they were certificated. At Dublin, the probationers paid a fee of £10 on entry; and during the first year that fee was returned in monthly salary. The second year they received £12; the third year they received £14, but they might bring in 44 guineas to the hospital in nursing fees; in the fourth year they earn £16, and they might bring in the £40 or £50 in private nursing fees. She thought that if nurses were receiving a regular fixed education, by which they could earn their future living, it would be fair if they neither paid a fee nor received a fee; for they would receive board and lodging, and so forth, in return for their work. Miss Huxley considered that nurses' certificates should be cancelled if they committed a criminal offence, and that such offences by nurses are undoubtedly increasing. She also mentioned that she had dismissed probationers who proved most unsuit-

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