

General Report of the "Association pour le Développement de l'Assistance aux Malades," Paris.

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MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR DE L'ASSISTANCE PUBLIQUE, MESDAMES, MESSIEURS,—We present our fifth general report to you with confidence. . . . The plan sketched at the time when, in a modest lodging in the Rue Garancière, we opened a rudimentary school with three pupils, is the same which we are pursuing undeviatingly to-day, with our school enlarged and well housed, our "Maison de Santé" filled, our little hospital and our service in the homes of the sick never lacking work. You recall the triple incentive which, six years ago, united us in a common effort—plans for the advantage of young women who needed to work to live, for the benefit of the sick, for the benefit of the physicians. We wished to open a new career to young women of small fortune but educated and earnest, capable and desirous of earning a livelihood while ameliorating the lot of others. We desired to furnish to the sick of all conditions, either in their homes or in hospitals, that irreproachably scientific, intelligent, and refined care which is expected from nurses of good technical instruction and cultivated humanity. We desired, finally, to furnish for the medical profession aids who should be disciplined and exact, while yet being human beings. It was a large programme; we could not hope to realise it in its entirety.

But what we could do, through the initiative of private individuals freely associated, was to open the way, to demonstrate that it is possible to reproduce in France a model of social help such as other countries have inaugurated. To-day we can testify that the way is open—the example submitted to the judgment of the public.

Another original policy to which we have held, and which we shall maintain in these days of political and religious antagonism, is the entire absence of confessional requirement, so that no one can suspect us of hostility to one church or of propaganda for another. The Association is for social work of an absolutely secular character.

"There are certain works," said M. Henri Monod to us here, two years ago, "whose creators have been moved by motives of pure humanity, unmixed by any other alloy, and your work is one of these."

Exacting to a high degree as to educational standards and moral guarantees, we wish to ignore what religion our pupils follow, or if they profess any. We wish only to demand from their conscience the essential sentiment of fraternity and mutual service, this sentiment which will be

deepened by the daily lesson, stronger than any of ours, the unformulated lesson given by the spectacle of misery and the struggle with sorrow.

Our lines of action, like our principles, have not changed. They develop regularly and along a definite line of progress.

Let us pass in review our different services.

Our essential organ is, and must remain, the School. We meet here to-day as at our true hearthstone. The nursing in the homes of the sick, the Maison de Santé of the Rue Oudinot, and the little hospital Alphen-Salvador, are the annexes of the school, practical domains where we can judge of the efficacy of the teaching given in the school, and adapt it better and better to its useful purpose. When a physician or a patient finds something lacking in the preparation of our pupils, we endeavour to remedy the defect. Thus our teaching is constantly directed by practice; but the teaching is important as the first preparation in training skilled nurses. The medical committee, which we have reorganised with care, and to which we assign an increasingly active rôle, presides over the studies of our pupils, and comprises, besides one of our earliest friends, six other distinguished medical men. Upon the advice of this committee, the course on professional duties has been replaced by a simple introductory lesson; that on the care of nervous patients has been reduced from ten lessons to three; on the other hand, the course in anatomy has been increased from fourteen lessons to twenty; that in pharmacy from five lessons to eight. Equilibrium between the different subjects is obtained by schedules, where each subject is graded according to its importance.

However, the art of nursing is not to be taught in so many lessons following a set prospectus. Beyond the necessary qualities, the pupils must have practice and habitude in their work. To this end we are working in sending our pupils to the public hospitals for practical service. The "Assistance publique," whose Director realises that our private work is a useful collaboration of his own, has, to our gratitude, generously opened certain medical, surgical, and lying-in hospitals to our pupils. Thus, at the bedside of the sick, they gain the experience which no science can supplant.

We aim at completing the curriculum of study by some preparation of another character, which will fit our nurses to take supervisory positions in the provincial hospitals. It is evident that progressive laicisation of hospitals throughout France must open to earnest-minded and capable young women a new future. If certain of our pupils, fitted by force of character, moral supremacy, and practical gifts, should desire to turn their talents in this direction, it would be proper to aid them by instituting a course of administrative detail. Perhaps then municipalities, having some suitable candidate in mind, would defray the expenses of the teaching

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