

which we would give her to fit her to return to them.

The selection of pupils is one of our greatest cares. We wish to welcome all, but we must be exacting. At the present moment the number of our pupils and assistants is twenty-four, while to assure the staffing of our *Maison de Santé*, and at the same time respond to all of the calls for private service which come daily, we would need 100. Let us hope that an effective and well-organised propaganda, in making us more widely known, will bring us so large a number that, after a rigid selection, the workers may not fail in the work. We need not fear that the work will fail. Our principal difficulties arise from an insufficient staff. Thus, the *Maison de Santé*, in which, in 1903, 231 operations were performed, is not staffed as it should be, and too much work falls upon the shoulders of a few.

[An account then follows of the instalment of a complete sterilising outfit in this private surgical hospital, with mention of the surgeons who operate there, and an explanation of a system by which the hospital and the operating surgeon co-operate to give a certain proportion of cases the necessary care, for a much reduced remuneration. It is hoped that the income of the paying patients in the *Maison de Santé* may in time assist in enlarging the work of the free (medical) hospital, but that has not yet come about. The pupils, after their training, are sent to private duty, and this is also limited for want of numbers. The arrangements for sick nurses and the creation of a sick benefit fund were also described.]

The report then continued:—

“Last year’s report made the announcement of the organisation of a voluntary visiting service in the homes of the poor. In spite of the publicity given to our projects and the appeal addressed to young women desirous of putting themselves at the service of needy classes of working people, we regret to have to say that we are still waiting. Here, as in many other things, there is evidently a hesitation in coming forward to inaugurate a new form of feminine activity, the eminent practicability of which has, however, been demonstrated in other countries. We take this occasion of explaining again that what we hope to do, besides providing skilled nurses for the sick, is to inaugurate a system of friendly visiting, and to prepare the voluntary visitors for their tasks by giving them the necessary knowledge, then sending them forth to carry, not only material relief, but the comfort and hope that friendship will bring into modest households overwhelmed with care and trouble. To the women—to the young women who hear us, we renew our appeal. May a few hear, and set the example for others to follow!

“This is the present state of our work; it is in full activity, and we pass through our difficulties, many of which are inherent in the work itself, without discouragement. We wish to create a secular work,

that is to say, to demand of our pupils no abdication of their personality. To do this we must appeal to their reason. Without doubt, a religious Sister or Deaconess, trained to obedience, is a more supple and convenient instrument. Inequalities of character are minimised by rules, and the religious institution where a mechanical docility reigns appears to be the abode of peace. For us, who aim no less at establishing a discipline—for discipline is necessary—we must instil the idea of a *spontaneous discipline*; we must obtain an active obedience, obedience to the guiding principle which binds us together. Our only resource is to make our young people understand what we expect of them, and why. Thus our work of aiding must, because it is secular, be also a work of education.”

The report, after a few concluding remarks, was then ended, and was followed by the report of the surgeon of the *Maison de Santé*, and finally responded to by M. Mesurier.

M. Mesurier, who then arose to reply to the various reports read during the course of the meeting, after some words of greeting said:—“Your school interests me for many reasons; for the recollection which I have of my visit to it last year, and most especially because I am upon the eve of establishing a highly-organised school for nurses (*école supérieure d’infirmières*).

“This school will be the realisation, the consummation, of a work undertaken years ago in Paris. Its need has long been evident, but a multitude of unfavourable circumstances have until now prevented its realisation. The preparation of our hospital nurses needs to be completed by a better teaching and by a selection which shall give to our hospitals candidates absolutely capable of nursing the sick.

“We have had the phenomenon, not uncommon in France, of private initiative preceding that of the public authorities. Your school has overcome initial difficulties, and has made itself a model which we are glad to follow. It is with schools of nursing as it has been in other fields of activity: if we look back we shall see that our primary, free, and compulsory education was enacted into law only after semi-secular efforts made by generous individuals who set the example and demonstrated the method.

“What has thus been done for the teaching of our children you have done, I may say, for the teaching of nurses. You have shown the way in which the administration should proceed. We will establish our school. It will be large, having place for about 150 pupils, but I shall ask of your school to feel no jealousy, but to act as the elder sister, towards which the younger will have the greatest deference, and which it will hope to consult in all difficult periods of its development.”

After some kindly words to the pupils of the school present, M. Mesurier continued:—

“The teaching of the nurse must be a double one.

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