

sections, following a uniform programme, by the same or different professors. The medical staffs of the hospitals can furnish teachers in all possible combinations.

The duties of the lay *Directrice* include the thorough superintendence of the administrative and scholastic services in the Tondu hospital. It is foreseen that it will be necessary to re-arrange the work of the school, the duties of the *Cheftaines* (Sisters) and of the certificated nurses, the hours of service, and the hours off duty of the pupils.

The newly-appointed *Directrice* of the Tondu School is Mlle. Enston, a lady of English extraction, trained under Dr. Hamilton at the Maison de Santé Protestante, Bordeaux. In addition to the *Directrice*, the nursing staff will comprise four *Cheftaines*, two certificated nurses, and ten pupils.

At the hospital of St. André there are three *Cheftaines* and twenty-one pupils.

Thus the good work goes on. We offer our hearty congratulations to Dr. Hamilton on the results of her work. We have little doubt that the example set by Bordeaux will be followed by other civic authorities.

THE NURSING QUESTION.

Dr. Lande has an interesting article in the *Journal de Médecine de Bordeaux* on the question of nurses in France. He says that when in June, 1900, Miss Hamilton presented to the medical faculty of Montpellier a thesis, entitled *Considérations sur les Infirmières des Hôpitaux*, there was quite a sensation. Many were scandalised at the audacity of a young woman in considering the personality and position of hospital nurses a worthy subject for the crowning point of her scholastic studies. Nevertheless, the work of the candidate was the result of prolonged research and of an attentive examination of the moral and material conditions of the subordinate staff in the hospitals of all nations. It indicated a far-sighted and novel project of organisation, conceived on the widest and most generous basis, and showed a high conception of a progressive and humane ideal.

The judges appointed to examine Miss Hamilton's thesis made no mistake, and in the midst of the unanimous congratulations of the jury, the young doctor made her appearance before a public which, with the quick revulsion of feeling of a southern population, acclaimed the woman, to whose arguments they had come to listen in the hope of piquant scenes and mocking criticisms.

Dr. Lande proceeds to say that Dr. Hamilton's thesis is still the most complete work extant in France on the question of hospital nurses. It gives a detailed, historic account of the work of nurses which in primitive times was performed by lay persons, but which from the ninth century passed almost exclusively into the hands of the religious orders. The exaggerated tendency of these orders to proselytism led, toward the end of the seventeenth

century, to the placing afresh of works of charity in the hands of lay persons, prominent amongst which must be mentioned the Daughters of Charity of the Order of St. Vincent de Paul. But the religious influence soon became predominant, and it is only during the last half-century that lay organisation has again reappeared.

Dr. Hamilton, in her thesis, which, it will be remembered, was reviewed at length at the time of its appearance in these columns, demonstrated why these later institutions have not effected in France the results which they might have been expected to show owing to a too abrupt readjustment of the subordinate staff of hospitals, without sufficient care being exercised as to their intellectual and moral elevation, and to the conditions under which they worked.

Miss Hamilton's ideal was to create in France a hospital service on the model inaugurated in England by Florence Nightingale, and she has had an opportunity as head of the Protestant Hospital at Bordeaux of putting her ideals into practice. She soon gathered round her a group of young girls, educated and distinguished, who shared her convictions and with real enthusiasm adopted a career still considered by their social circle as derogatory.

Miss Hamilton's work has served as an example to France, and it is owing to her that the Administrative Commission of the Bordeaux Hospitals has founded its nursing school.

Since the presentation of Dr. Hamilton's thesis in 1900, three others have followed in her footsteps.

At the beginning of the school year 1903-4, Dr. Roger Colomb, a pupil of the naval school, supported before the Medical Faculty of Bordeaux a thesis on "The part of woman in the assistance of sick and wounded soldiers."

Considering the nursing question from the special point of view of army nursing, Dr. Colomb has studied particularly the position of the military nurse.

It will be remembered that Dr. Colomb's thesis was also reviewed in this journal in the beginning of the present year.

It showed how, as in the case of lay nurses working amongst a civil population, the introduction of female nurses into military hospitals was but a reversion to the custom of ancient times. "During the age of chivalry women of high degree staunched the wounds (of which they were often the cause) of their cavaliers returning from the tournaments."

The author then describes army nursing organisation in England, which has the honour of being first in the field, in Germany, in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Russia, and Japan, the last of which, Dr. Colomb asserts, may well serve as a model to European nations.

In the case of France, while from the first it gave its adherence to the Geneva Convention, and founded in 1867 the Society for the Assistance of Wounded Soldiers, in 1870 it had only a rudimentary

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