

Miss L. L. Dock, Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Nurses, in response to an invitation from Miss Barton, then addressed the meeting, and described past and present nursing conditions in Germany from the time when it was in the hands of the nuns to the present, each variety being a distinct step towards the development of the individual.

First came the nuns, who were very submissive; then arose the Lutheran Deaconesses, the formation of such communities being almost as revolutionary at the time as the subsequent movement to give nurses a voice in their own affairs and personal freedom of action. The idea of these deaconess communities was that they should be founded on the pattern of a family, the pastor acting as father, the head of the deaconesses as mother, the deaconesses themselves being the children. The one main lesson impressed upon them by their superiors was that of humility. Over and over again in the old records it is insisted upon, and appears to have been regarded as the chief, first, and last of virtues.

Later this form of organisation was outgrown, and it was certainly open to objections from the economic standpoint. Also if the deaconesses severed their connection with the institution, they were turned out to shift for themselves as nurses in the big cities with no knowledge of the world, and sometimes with very sad results.

Next came the Red Cross organisation, in many ways excellent, but here again the nurse belongs to the Association, and her earnings go to the institution. The Victoria House at Berlin, founded by the late Empress Frederick, and the Eppendorf at Hamburg were organised on more liberal lines.

Lastly, Sister Karill, who for twenty years has known the struggle and the poverty of German nurses, endeavoured to form what are known as the Free Sisters into an Association. This German Nurses' Association has now 600 members. It is impossible to tell how hard, or how courageous has been their struggle. They command both sympathy and interest in the effort which is before them, before they can hope to move the huge machinery of the Government of a country like Germany.

Dr. J. J. Perkins, of Wimpole Street, has presented a report to the Holborn Board of Guardians as to the result of his examination of the nurses at their various institutions. Seventeen, it was stated, passed, only two failing. The answering of the successful candidates was stated to be remarkably good, and showed that they had been well and practically taught, and that they had made the most of their opportunities. In view of the fact that the Board had fixed so high a standard as 70 marks in the 100 for a pass, the Infirmary Committee expressed the opinion that the result re-

flected much credit on the medical superintendent, the assistant medical officer, and the Matron.

The Bridgwater Infirmary is feeling the effect upon its finances of the growing popularity of district nursing. Dr. W. L. Winterbotham, at a public meeting held recently to consider the financial position of the institution, said that there had been established a network of district nursing, embracing all parts of the country. Consequently all minor cases which formerly went to the infirmary for treatment were now attended to by a skilled woman. It affected the medical men and the infirmary, and it was a bad thing for them both, inasmuch as it had the effect of cutting off a great deal of support which would be otherwise given to the infirmary. District nursing had come to stay, because it was a good thing, and because it received the enthusiastic support of the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood. They would have to reckon with that, and, as far as he could see, if they did not keep down their expenditure in some shape or form they would always have a big deficit. He did not think that the sources of their income would increase, inasmuch as they would have to contend with the growing popularity of district nursing. It was a great pity, as both were most excellent institutions, but they would have to face this overlapping. The requirements of modern medicine and surgery were very expensive—too expensive, he thought, and consequently their financial condition should be overhauled for a period of years until they saw a reaction setting in favour of hospital work, as was the case now with district nursing.

This is the second recent instance of the funds of a hospital being affected by District Nursing Associations. If the work performed is in the hands of fully-trained nurses, no doubt a certain proportion of cases may be as efficiently and more economically nursed than if they were received into a hospital, but if such district nursing is to fall into the hands of midwives, with a knowledge of first-aid, the withdrawal of financial assistance from county hospitals to support this form of nursing the poor is to be greatly deplored.

At the quarterly meeting of the Governors Educational Trust, Aberdeen, the Administration Committee reported that a request by Colonel Allardyce, chairman of the Royal Infirmary Board, on behalf of the Infirmary nurses for a course of instruction in sick-room cookery, had been considered. It was agreed to arrange for a course of instruction being given to the Infirmary nurses during the month of May. The fee for the course was fixed at 2s. 6d. per head. The Chairman, in reference to this matter, said he understood that about forty nurses had applied for instruction. The fee charged would only cover what might be termed outlays. They did not want to make money, and so only charged a sum that would make ends meet.

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