

Professional Review.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SUPERINTENDENTS.

The Annual Report of the American Society of Superintendents is one of the good things to which we look forward each year, and this year the record of the fourteenth Annual Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, equals in interest those which have preceded it, and the opinions expressed by the various members who took part in the debates prove the high ideals which animate this society which, beginning fifteen years ago with a membership of 25 has now nearly 300 members on its Roll.

NO DARKNESS BUT IGNORANCE.

Miss M. A. Nutting, Professor of Domestic Science at Teachers' College, Columbia University, replying to the addresses of welcome, said, "No body of workers faces greater problems, more complicated, delicate, and intricate problems, than do the Superintendents of hospitals and the Superintendents of training Schools. No deeper duty and responsibility lies upon any woman, I think, than upon the one who, at the head of a training school for nurses, is preparing women not only for the care of the sick, but, as we have just been reminded by one of our doctors, for much responsibility in the community. Feeling, as I do, that there is 'no darkness but ignorance,' I urge our need of greater knowledge and of the wisdom which 'lingers' that we may fully understand what the community needs of us."

DIETITIANS IN HOSPITALS.

Miss F. R. Corbett, in an interesting paper on "Dietitians in Hospitals," advocated the appointment of a woman trained in food administration at the head of the dietary department of hospitals, to take charge of all the divisions of the dietary work, both because of the increasing importance attached to the influence of diet in health and disease, and the tendency to develop all lines of hospital work on a more correct and scientific foundation. She emphasised the desirability of one trained and experienced worker, supervising the work of the entire department, in order that each division may maintain its proper relation to every other division.

"Examples of the difficulties which result from the lack of co-ordination of the kitchens, dining-rooms, and store-rooms, come readily to mind. There is always, even in the best of kitchens, the tendency of the cooks responsible for the work there to lose the point of view of the dining-rooms in the preparation of the food, and unless they are almost daily reminded of the fact that they are not cooking simply for the purpose of preparing so much food to be sent out of the kitchen, but that they are cooking to meet certain needs in other parts of the institution, there will be lapses of many kinds, most of them mere details, but which in the sum total make all the difference between satisfactory and unsatisfactory food.

There is no more wholesome incentive to endeavour in the kitchen than the knowledge that the one who is the highest immediate authority does not relax her vigilance after the food leaves

the kitchen, but that she will see it in the dining-room or on the patient's tray, and that she will not only listen attentively to criticisms on the part of those to whom the food is served, but that she will investigate those criticisms thoroughly. At the same time, this breadth of authority and knowledge serves as a tonic in the dining-room administration, wherein the employees are quite aware that responsibility for any unsatisfactory condition cannot safely be shifted to the kitchen, nor to any other point, as the one in highest immediate authority has also full knowledge of conditions in the kitchen and store. This provision for authority over the entire dietary department by one person is one of the strongest points that makes for success in the administration of dietary work."

Miss Corbett also emphasises the value of the Dietitian as a teacher, not only as an instructor of the nurses in sick-room cookery, but "she is also in a position to play a considerable part in moulding the opinions and forming the standards in regard to food and its service, of thousands of people who come to the institution in the course of a year. Even the hospital which has but 100 beds will receive in its wards during the course of the year many times that number of people.

"If the quality of the food, by reason of its correct preparation and careful service, were such as to impress these people favourably, and cause them to observe and inquire into the methods and the cost of its preparation, who can estimate the influence that would be brought into the homes to which these people would go after their hospital residence? And who can say that the extent and the value of such influence would be one whit less than that of the teacher of domestic science in the schoolroom? Why should hospitals not be looked upon as a sort of social settlement, in which influences of this sort must be estimated and provided for? How many of us can speak with conviction of hospitals where the preparation and service of food would furnish a proper standard in these matters for the people in the institutions who must partake of the food, and which would have the effect of raising the standards in the homes of these people when they leave the hospital? I am afraid that hospitals in general are not considered to establish standards in these matters and that hospital conditions prevalent at this time do not encourage the idea, yet what better opportunity could possibly present itself?"

IDEAL TRAINING.

Miss Jane M. Pindell, discussing the question, "What Ground can a Municipal Hospital cover in the Training of Nurses?" contended that "ideal training is not that which covers most ground, but that which fits a nurse to render the best practical service to the sick."

THE THREE YEARS' STANDARD.

The question of the two *versus* the three years' standard was raised in the course of the convention, and Miss Goodrich, Superintendent of Nurses of Bellevue and the Allied Hospitals, New York, spoke as follows:—"Madam President, I cannot fail to rise every time to the question of two against three years. We admit our pupils younger

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)