

visitor only being allowed to see a female patient under escort of a female attendant, or nurse. This is the first time we hear of a female nurse or watcher on the insane, but even then they were a swearing, bullying, loud-voiced type of person.

Yet in France, in the hospitals consecrated to suffering, the female nurse was all tenderness and devotion to her patients, quiet-voiced and gentle. Probably they drew their inspiration from their religion.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, nursing and hospital care of the sick fell to the lowest ebb in its history. There was, however, one religious order which cared for the insane at this time—the Roman Catholic order of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in 1633, and probably the largest nursing organisation in the world.

About A.D. 1646, Thomas Willis revived the doctrine of the relation of mind and brain. Based upon his own dissections he gave a most complete and accurate account of the nervous system. He described the network of arteries at the base of the brain now known as the "Circle of Willis." He also classified the cranial nerves.

William Cullen, another physician, in 1755, did much to advance the science. His teachings showed the important part played by the nervous system both in health and disease.

For many centuries all diseases had been considered due to disorders of the fluids in the body. William Cullen denied this belief, and many of his speculations as to reflex nervous action, the presence in a single nerve of both sensory and motor fibres, and the connection of sensory and motor nerves with the anterior and posterior roots, have now been proved as facts. His treatment for maniacal patients were as many lashes as a physician now orders drops of physic. Skill and science for the treatment of the insane were still unknown.

The mental breakdown of George III did more than anything else to rouse attention to the existing plight of the insane.

The members of the Society of Friends in the State of Pennsylvania, were the first to make philanthropic efforts to provide "hospital" accommodation for the insane, their efforts following at a very short interval, the work of Pinel and Tuke.

The abolition of mechanical restraint in the treatment of the insane began in 1792 with Pinel in Paris. A Parisian physician, he gained for himself undying fame by his reformation of the old barbarous method of treatment. He was appointed physician of Bicêtre, the great Hospital for male patients in Paris, where hitherto the treatment had been just as barbarous as that in England and other parts of Europe.

Pinel abolished all forms of restraint, eliminated abusive practice and substituted more humane treatment.

About this time, in the city of York, William Tuke, a member of the Society of Friends, roused by the conditions of the insane, raised funds to establish a retreat for members of the Friends Society who were or might become mentally afflicted.

In 1796 York Retreat was opened for the care and treatment of the insane. Skill and science took the place of previous barbarous methods.

The die had been cast. Tuke's beginning was quickly followed by the strenuous efforts of Esquirol in France, Connolly and Gardener Hill in England, and Rush in America,

## Nursing Echoes.

TWO SCHOLARSHIPS OF £150 each for the year 1952/53 will be awarded by the Scottish Branch of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis to Scottish nurses for post-graduate study in tuberculosis.

One of the Scholarships will be awarded to a Scottish nurse working in a hospital or clinic in Scotland, and the other to a Queen's Nurse working in Scotland, preferably in the Highlands.

The Scholarships are tenable for a period of three months in hospitals and clinics in either the United Kingdom or Scandinavia.

Applications should be sent to the Secretary, N.A.P.T., 65, Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2, before October 1st, 1952.

We learn that the Paediatric Course organised by the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was a huge success. Sixty-eight nurses representing thirteen different countries attended and there was no language difficulty whatever!

The lectures and social visits were greatly appreciated and many international friendships formed.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL for District Nursing in London have a further request to make to our generous readers.

Having lodged an appeal for Queen Victoria Pence for the district nursing funds, they ask that these valuable parcels be sent to the offices of the Council at 25, Cockspur Street, London, S.W.1, and not to the Chairman who lodged the appeal.

We hope many halfpennies and pennies may find their way to this historic part of London.

IT IS A COMMON SIGHT to see the white ambulances running through our streets day by day, and so we think a few facts from a recent report on a year's working of the Ambulance Service would be of interest to our readers.

During the year under review the ambulances ran more than 89 million miles and carried more than 9 million patients; and the total cost of the ambulance services was £7,411,502.

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW Group Hospital in Blantyre, Nyasaland, at a cost of £530,000, is to begin this month.

The sisters' hostel will be completed first so that it may be used to house the extra staff required by the Public Works Department for an undertaking of this size.

Single storey buildings will at first provide accommodation for 236 beds. In addition, there will be out-patient and casualty accommodation, a central laboratory and a training school for African hospital assistants.

The layout will provide for future expansion by stages, to an eventual maximum of 800 beds.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING of the World Federation for Mental Health is to be held in Brussels from 24th to 30th August next.

The Meeting is being held at the Universite Libre in Brussels.

Particulars and application forms in connection with the Meeting may be obtained in this country from—

The General Secretary,

National Association for Mental Health,  
39, Queen Anne Street, W.1.

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