

usually prevails in India. I know of no more irksome or depressing duty than that of a sick attendant in an Indian Hospital in the hot weather, and yet to compensate him for the long weary hours he spends in our wards in the presence of sickness and death the Indian Government allow a soldier orderly a free 'chota hasjoi' of bread and tea! It is folly to suppose that you can obtain good Nursing or any other good thing without paying for it. Sanction the issue of extra-duty pay in India to men who have qualified in a nursing class and good men will come forward for the duty, and I have given an example of how, out of good material and with the co-operation of the C.O., it is possible to get trustworthy and valuable soldier orderlies. Orderlies of the M.S.C. would doubtless be of great service in India, but, as you have pointed out, in order that there services may be available for the many 'special' cases of an Indian Hospital, the proportion they bear to the sick under treatment would have to be considerably larger than what obtains at home. In conclusion, I thank you for giving publicity to this subject. The yearly increasing prevalence and virulence of enteric fever in India is sufficiently perplexing to doctors without having their curative efforts handicapped by the ignorance and stupidity of their Nurses.

H. D. R."

"A MENTAL Nurse" writes as follows to the *Gentlewoman* :—

"I have read with pleasure your remarks upon the employment of ladies for the care of the insane. It is not generally known that there are already numbers of ladies, both by birth and education, who have had great experience in asylums, and who are capable and willing to undertake—with advantage to the patient—the care of private cases. The large proportion of patients now relegated in haste to asylums, because unmanageable by their relations, could be cured and spared the everlasting stigma of 'lunatic' by being placed under the judicious care of a lady as efficiently trained in her branch of nursing as the ordinary Hospital Nurse is in hers. Numbers of patients suffering from neurosis (or any other of the thousand and one nervous maladies) sent to asylums, become chronic lunatics for want of physical treatment. It is little realised how often the mind is thrown off its balance by dyspepsia and other ailments which might be successfully treated by massage, change of air, proper diet, cheerful companionship and occupation—all of which remedies are too often conspicuous by their absence in asylums, but as easily obtained under private care as hospital treatment for solely physical cases."

MR. CLINTON DENT concluded his introductory address, on Tuesday last, to the Nurses at St. George's Hospital. The interest was sustained throughout and much valuable information imparted. After briefly glancing at the religious spirit of the Middle Ages, of which nursing the sick was the practical outcome, the lecturer took up the thread of his discourse from the early part of this century at which point he had left off the preceding week. No very material reform appears to have taken place in the Nursing department until after the new Hospital was opened. It had been apparent for some time that the original building was totally inadequate to meet the demands made upon it. It was, in addition, very dirty and very dilapidated. Accordingly, in the year 1825, a new Hospital containing over 200 beds was commenced, a little in the rear of the old building, which latter was occupied until the other was ready in 1834.

The proportion of nurses to patients seems to have been very small, at one time only 1 to 10 patients, but they rapidly increased in number till in 1845 there were 45 nurses to about 200 patients. It is important to note that the first record of the entry of a Probationer was in the year 1844, when a religious Nursing community applied to the weekly Board for permission to have one of their number trained in the wards of the Hospital.

The general character of the Nurses at that time appears to have been pretty much the same everywhere, and some interesting remarks were read from Sir JAMES PAGET on the type which prevailed at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. There, as at St. George's, the Head Nurses or Sisters were, on the whole, capable and devoted women; but the Assistants were all of a very low class, ignorant, coarse, and incapable of improvement. There was no science then in Nursing, it was looked on as a disagreeable duty and one to be got through as quickly as possible. The Assistant Nurses were expected to do all the scrubbing and cleaning, and in the intervals give such attention as they could spare from other duties to the patients. They cooked their meals at the ward fires, and ate them in the passages or on the stairs as was most convenient, for they had no dining room. Then came the years of the Crimean war, when the public at last awoke to the fact that Nursing as practised commonly left very much to be desired. With the name of Miss FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE must be coupled that of Mr. SYDNEY HERBERT, who took an equally active part in directing attention to the terrible amount of preventible mortality then occurring among our soldiers in the Hospital at Scutari. St. George's Hospital, in common with several others, contributed a Nurse to join the little band of devoted women who, under Miss NIGHTINGALE, went out to the East. SARAH TAPP was her name, and she lived to return to the Hospital and did good work for some long time afterwards.

Nursing from that date began rapidly to improve, and from being a trade—and a bad trade—it has developed into a profession—and a very fine profession. At St. George's many important reforms were initiated, the number of Nurses increased rapidly, their salaries were raised, and in 1865 uniforms were introduced and henceforth they became part of the Hospital. The Matron's position grew correspondingly in importance, and she was charged with the entire control of the female staff. After some excellent and practical remarks on the inadvisability of making class distinctions among women who enter the "republic of Nursing," Mr. DENT concluded a most valuable and interesting address.

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