

The building was duly opened and staffed by Nurses, irrespective of whether they were trained or not. The original staff thus organised was, it stands to reason, inadequate for the efficient discharge of the duties they were called upon to perform, and there being no actual bond of sympathy between the persons so engaged, that unanimity of purpose and *esprit de corps*, which should manifest themselves in such an institution, did not exist. Resignation of the Nurses was frequent, and the regular work of the establishment was often disturbed by defections of this kind. Not that this was a circumstance peculiar to Mile End, for it probably exists in other places where the old system is still in force.

These frequent resignations made it imperative that some alteration should be made, and the Infirmary Committee, under the then Chairman, Dr. Grant, cast about for the best means of counteracting and preventing a continuance of this state of things, and the result has been the introduction of our present system of filling vacancies in the Nursing Staff with young women of a superior class as Probationers; under our present methods we afford these young persons the means of acquiring such information of a technical kind as a person in charge of the sick should have, and, after a year's course in this training, they are given the opportunity of proving their capabilities by appearing before an Examiner who is chosen from an outside Institution. Should their examination prove successful they then become eligible for appointments to the higher posts.

A scheme of this kind was placed before the Local Government Board and approved by them. This scheme, though still young, has proved of unquestionable advantage to all concerned in the administration of the Infirmary, insuring a degree of competency in the members of the Nursing Staff which previously could not be expected under the old system. Consequently, with the improved means of obtaining Nurses, an increase in their number has taken place, so that now the Nursing Staff is about double what it was at the opening of the Infirmary ten years ago.

I am sure the Guardians would wish to recognise the very hearty way in which Dr. Robinson has carried out this work, so ably assisted by Miss Stewart, and it must be a source of great gratification to them to know that their efforts have been so successful.

As an encouragement to those who pass, and to mark this improved condition of affairs, the Board determined that the eminently satisfactory results obtained after the first year's working of the scheme should be characterized by the presentation of the Certificates of Proficiency, and that these should be given in the presence of the Board and certain friends of the Hamlet. To carry this into effect we have been singularly fortunate in obtaining the co-operation of one who has long identified himself with the movement for the better care and treatment of the sick poor—I refer to Sir Henry Acland. Sir Henry's presence here to-day is a matter of great satisfaction to the Board, and the Nurses who receive their Certificates from his hands may be proud of the compliment paid them by Sir Henry, in undertaking this very interesting duty."

So far good, but by no means perfect. * We venture to hope that in the near future Certificates of Proficiency will not be awarded at Mile End to young women who have undergone but one year's training; and must have, therefore, but a very limited knowledge and experience of what a "trained Nurse" should know and be. The Mile End Infirmary must work up to the three years' standard, as is the case at Chelsea, Kensington, and other large Infirmarys, with whose well established methods Mr. KERWIN does not appear to be acquainted, and only certificate its pupils when they are efficient, as well as proficient.

National Health Society.

President :—HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, K.G.



Miss Dunbar is now giving a Course of Homely Talks on Health at Hove, near Brighton. The audience last week numbered over a hundred, having begun with about 20.

In consequence of the success of the talks at Chatham, given by Mrs. Dickson and Miss Deane, the Technical Education Committee at Milton, near Sittingbourne, determined to have a similar course. The Society, therefore, arranged that Mrs. Dickson should give them, and, accordingly, she commenced on January 18th.

Mrs. Phipps, in the beginning of February, starts again for another six weeks Course in South Bucks. The Secretary, in writing to make arrangements, said, "You will be glad to hear that Mrs. Phipps' Homely Talks have everywhere been most successful. Her way of lecturing is excellent, and she is greatly liked in this neighbourhood. I cannot speak too highly of Mrs. Phipps."

The Lent Lectures arranged by this Society will commence on February 14th, at 4 p.m., in the Committee Room, 53, Berners Street. The first lectures will be given by Dr. C. G. Shelley, "On the Feeding of Schoolboys and Schoolgirls." It is hoped that all who are interested in this subject will attend. The Course consists of six lectures given by eminent authorities on various subjects. Syllabus and tickets can be obtained at the Office of the Society, 53, Berners Street.

A Course of Six Popular Lectures, on Domestic, Personal, and Public Health, will commence on January 31st, at Caius Hall, Battersea, the lecturer being Dr. Edward Squire. The Society is giving this Course entirely free.

Miss Smith has just concluded a Course of Homely Talks on Home Nursing at Brentwood, Essex. At the end of the series it was decided to hold an Examination; sixteen candidates entered, of whom twelve passed—a very creditable number, as they were mostly composed of the working classes, which shows that they must have attended and taken interest in the lectures.

The Lindsey County Council decided, in the beginning of the year, to organise further Courses of Homely Talks, and Miss Ravenhill has gone into Lincolnshire (Louth District) for a period of ten weeks.

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