

**Toynbee Nursing Guild.**

ON Tuesday, November 24th, the monthly lecture was delivered by Dr. Stephen Mackenzie. The chair was taken by Sir Vincent K. Barrington. Amongst those present were Sir John Gorst, M.P., Lady Vincent Barrington, Canon Barnett, Mrs. Barnett (President of the Guild), Mrs. Mackenzie (Treasurer to the Guild), Mrs. Maitland, M.L.S.B., and Miss Rosalind Paget.

Sir Vincent Barrington, in his introductory remarks, said it gave him great pleasure to support any movement which would assist in any way the great work of ministering to the sick. He had had experience under the Geneva Convention in various foreign countries, and he welcomed any movement which would relieve some of our over-worked Nurses from a portion of their burden.

Dr. Mackenzie chose as his subject "What Doctors expect of Nurses." He began by stating that he regretted it had been impossible as yet to abolish what was known as the twelve-hour shift for Hospital Nurses. Nurses should be "neat" in their dress—which would be of a washable material—and in all their personal habits. It was scarcely necessary for him to emphasise this point, for nearly every Hospital Nurse offered a pattern in this respect. Nurses should be "truthful": he did not suggest that anybody in the room did not love the truth, but people sometimes made small mistakes and omissions in duty, and it was of the utmost importance that matters of this kind should be accurately and faithfully reported to the doctor. Then a Nurse should be accurate, for science was measurement, and the efficiency of a Nurse depended on the exactness with which she carried out the doctor's instructions. Finally, a Nurse should be observant. The Doctor regarded the Nurse as his sentinel; she saw the patient constantly, and her observation was invaluable to the Doctor. Nurses are made, not born. The faculty of observation could be greatly improved by practice. It had been said that Houdin the great conjuror, by constantly noting articles in shop windows as he passed, and recalling them afterwards, was able in a remarkable way to develop his faculty of observation. Dr. Mackenzie concluded by expressing his great indebtedness to the Nursing profession.

Sir John Gorst in a witty speech, moved a vote of thanks to Dr. Mackenzie.

Mrs. Stephen Mackenzie moved a vote of thanks to Sir Vincent Barrington for taking the chair. The motion was supported by Mrs. Barnett and carried unanimously.

**A Conference of Infirmary Matrons.**

A CONFERENCE was convened on Tuesday afternoon upon the invitation of Miss Vincent, Matron of the St. Marylebone Infirmary, at 12, Buckingham Street, to consider the following Resolutions in relation to the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act. The Meeting was strongly representative, amongst others present being Miss Vincent, Miss Morgan, Miss Shipley, Miss Esther Jones, Miss Griffiths, Miss Elma Smith, and Miss Gibson from Birmingham. The business discussed was:

"To consider the various sections of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, and the effect which this Act is likely to exercise upon the work of Trained Nurses in Parish Infirmaries, and in the other allied Institutions.

To consider the expediency of laying before the Houses of Parliament, early in the next Session, a Petition, that those sections of the Act which bear injuriously upon women workers be amended.

And, in order to ensure that the necessary amendments be carried, that those gathered at this Conference be asked to make the nature of this Act, in its relation to the work of women, as widely known as possible amongst Members of Parliament, and all others whose influence is likely to be beneficial."

A thoroughly practical and interesting discussion took place, and it was arranged to memorialise Members of Parliament to alter various clauses in the Act which were considered injurious to the best interests of the Nurses, and the Nursing of the sick in Poor Law Infirmaries. It was suggested that the retiring age for Nurses should be from 50 to 55 instead of from 60 to 65, and also that contributions paid by Nurses should be returnable if a pension was not claimed. This Meeting of Infirmary Matrons marks an epoch in the Nursing World, especially as it is very generally felt and expressed, that the Committee to arrange the details of the Memorial should be composed of Matrons—a gentleman being selected as Chairman. We congratulate these ladies in uniting to obtain the necessary alterations in the Act, which they consider would be beneficial to their own department, and recognise in their action the result of the growth of personal responsibility concerning their professional affairs, which is bound to result in good to the community.

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