

which male nurses were employed were of a chronic nature, or cases of paralysis, syphilis, etc. It was quite evident that in such cases men were much more suitable as nurses than women, and there certainly was an increasing demand for their services.

Mr. Walshe, Superintendent of the Male Nurses' Temperance Co-operation said that he considered that at times the employment of male nurses had very distinct advantages. He instanced a case in which a female nurse, who was nursing a patient suffering from pneumonia, who had become delirious, was found holding the candle, while the patient, who was scantily clad, hunted in the cellar for something he fancied he wanted, because she was afraid to thwart him. Also it was not always fair to ask a lady to nurse certain cases, or certain patients. He was of opinion that male nurses, though in some ways they could not compete with women, were useful as co-workers. His experience of military trained nurses was not at all a pleasant one, indeed, he believed they were a total failure. A certain amount of education was required of them, and the most suitable men were consequently not always chosen; perhaps a defaulting clerk was selected, on account of the education he possessed, and men of this stamp were apt to victimize their patients when they became private nurses. In asylums men were able to obtain a great deal of experience. Mr. Walshe said that he had visited most of the countries of Europe with a view to ascertaining the conditions of male nursing. It was not very good. To begin with, those who selected the nurses were not particular about the class of men taken. They took them on very much in the same way as a cab yard takes on a driver.

With regard to the training obtainable in this country, there were a certain number of Provincial Hospitals which were glad to take on their staffs men who had had some Asylum training. They paid them about £25 a year. It must be remembered that though ladies, to whom a salary was of no importance, took to nursing, sometimes because it was the fashion, men did so in order to make a living, and they were obliged to have a salary upon which they could live. The Matrons of Hospitals were sometimes, Mr. Walshe thought prejudiced against male nurses, consequently, when a man was required, in at least one hospital, he was fetched in from the nearest pot house. What was needed was efficient training, not of the "corner man," but of men of the right stamp. He was not able to say which hospital would do so, but he believed that *some* hospital would eventually show the way in training male nurses, and would gain credit by doing so.

Mrs. Fenwick (London) said the question was "Do the public want male nurses? If so, they will have them." In her opinion there were numerous cases in private houses which the trained nurse might well spare to her male colleague, and this being the case she thought it was the duty of some one to see that the public got well-qualified male nurses. The men must not be blamed for inefficiency if the lack of systematic instruction and other facilities were denied to them. There seemed to be a consensus of opinion that the training in military hospitals was defective, but it was the duty of the military authorities both for the sake of our sick soldiers, and for the benefit of the orderlies themselves, to see that military hospitals should be schools of male nursing. This would never be until the Lady Superintendents had more voice in the

organization of the Nursing Department, and were represented as they ought to be on Military Boards, dealing with the nursing department, of which they had more practical experience than even a Commander-in-Chief.

In the States, where schools of male nurses were already well organized, and of great national value, they were invariably superintended by a woman, and the course was so useful that many men, who ultimately became medical students went through a course of training in nursing, and thus acquired invaluable practical knowledge. We should have less of the "upish" nurse in private practice if medical men had the opportunity in this country of gaining such experience.

Miss Isla Stewart thought that male nurses should be trained in infirmaries, where there were no students. They would be of much use, and would get a fair training. In hospitals with medical schools attached the students performed much work, and she thought there was not much room for male nurses. Until the syphilitic ward at St. Bartholomew's Hospital was closed a male nurse was employed there, who was exceedingly satisfactory. She believed he was now in an asylum. She thought that the military hospitals, the infirmaries, and the country hospitals, afforded the best training ground for male nurses.

Mr. Walshe remarked that he had omitted to mention that men were at present trained in several infirmaries.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

I.—IS THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL CORPS OF NURSES FOR ACTIVE SERVICE IN FOREIGN WARS DESIRABLE?

Mrs. Fenwick said that it was suggested to place questions on the Agenda, so that there might be free discussion on subjects of interest without a formal paper, and that the question above was suggested by her personal experiences in organising the National Nursing Corps in the Græco-Turkish war. Owing to the "splendid isolation" and the resulting "enforced neutrality" of Great Britain during the wars of foreign nations our own Army Nursing Sisters are not available, so that any nursing help offered is usually upon the initiative of individuals, and has to be organized by individuals on the spur of the moment. This course has many drawbacks, as such organization is necessarily incomplete and defective in material, and suitable nurses are not always selected. So much of the success of such difficult work depends upon the *personnel* of the nurses, that an intimate knowledge of the temperament of those selected is most necessary. Then *esprit de corps* is essential, and this is difficult to maintain amongst a heterogeneous corps of nurses. Thrifty expenditure was also very difficult—unless systematically arranged. Owing to the generous response of the nation to the appeal of the *Daily Chronicle*, and the Press, the National Ambulance Corps had been able to do good work, but only by an enormous expenditure of quite

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