

to the American Society of Superintendents of Nurses for their services of time, money and labour so freely expended in the higher interests of trained nurses and the nursing profession." The two Societies are quite distinct, but between them there is the warmest bond of sympathy, and in consequence the sincerest admiration and loyalty on the part of the Graduates to their teachers and Superintendents. Is it not time that the Matrons' Council should bring services of time and labour to the aid of the Graduate Nurses of this country, and emulate the sterling example of their American colleagues? I think it is.

It remains for you ladies to do me the honour of discussing the various points brought before you, very inadequately, in the foregoing remarks.

Firstly, I would ask you to discuss the details of a Practical Standard of Nursing, touching on the curriculum of education—the fairest method of examination—and the benefits of State Registration.

And, secondly, How are trained nurses to organise, so that their needs can be voiced effectually, and brought before the Legislature?

#### DISCUSSION.

Miss Stewart (London), in opening the discussion said the difficulties in carrying out a practical standard such as Mrs. Bedford Fenwick had advocated were extreme. Perhaps she did not quite realise how great these difficulties were. The power of inertia was strong. Then again the emergencies of a large hospital made systematic training difficult. A nurse must be sent where her services were required, and to give her courses of three month's training in four different wards during the year was admirable from a training point of view, but it could not always be carried out. Again there was the difficulty of getting good nurses. There were so many good women in the world who would never make good nurses. She thought that if out of a hundred women ten were found who made first-rate nurses it was a very good average. With regard to the Sisters teaching their nurses, it must be remembered that they were not the servants of the training school but of the hospital, and their energy must of necessity be spent in nursing their patients. It must also be remembered that what one is taught is of infinitely less value than what one teaches oneself. It was possible that nurses might be overtaught, so that they came to expect to have everything made easy for them, and did not take pains, consequently, to acquire knowledge for themselves. The efficient training of Matrons was a difficult matter. A Matron must, of course, be a good nurse. In addition to this, she was expected to understand laundry work, a drapery business, and must, moreover, possess the powers of managing and influencing others, and of tact. Then, again, the difficulties of examination were almost insurmountable. No examination which could be devised would succeed in enabling one to choose a good nurse. That State Registration was what we must aim at there could be no doubt. To obtain that Miss Stewart said she took an active part

in helping to found the British Nurses' Association ten years ago, and later on the Matrons' Council for the same reason. Ever since she was a probationer, nineteen years ago, the subject had been one in which she was keenly interested. The question of examination, however, was a thorny one and beset with difficulties.

Miss Poole (Blackburn) asked if State Registration did not necessitate a public examination in the theory of nursing. A certificate of the nursing powers of the candidates in their practice work would, she assumed be given by their training schools.

Miss Mollett (Southampton) was of opinion that registration of nurses, was as feasible and as needful as the registration of medical men. The examination question she admitted was a difficulty. It was not practicable for country nurses to have more theoretical training than they had at present. The visiting staff of County Hospitals were popular practitioners and extremely busy men. The time which they gave to lecturing to the nurses meant an actual loss to them of £ s. d.; to ask them to increase their lectures, therefore, would be very excellent for the nurses, but practically quite impossible.

Miss Pell-Smith (Leicester) enquired whether if so much scientific and domestic work were required of nurses, whether the patients would not suffer. The tendency of some probationers was to put their theoretical before their practical work.

Miss Kingsford (London) thought that there should be some preliminary test of a nurses' qualifications. With regard to domestic work for instance, when she herself began her training, she knew something about it, but she well remembered that she entered the hospital at the same time as a very capable woman. This recruit was set to sweep a ward, and she did it with great care. When it was finished one of the patients remarked, "Well nurse, it is quite easy to see *you've* never handled a broom before." There must be something wanting in the qualifications of a probationer if a patient is able to make such a remark as that. She therefore cordially agreed as to the necessity for a preliminary examination in domestic matters as well as in physiology and anatomy also. The danger of nurses devoting too much time to theoretical knowledge would be minimised if they acquired this before they entered the wards.

Mrs. Andrews (London) thought that the difficulty of teaching being given by ward-sisters to nurses who were training had been over-estimated. A sister worked with her nurses, and it was only natural that in doing so she should teach them the best way of working, and the reasons for the work they were performing. Again, if she trained her nurses properly, the value of her work came back to the hospital, because the future ward-sisters were appointed from the nurses so trained; also future matrons were turned out capable in consequence, and their capacity redounded to the credit of their training school. She thought the difficulty mentioned by Miss Mollett might be overcome by the lecturer's position being made remunerative. She did not see why they should be expected to give their services.

Miss Huxley (Dublin) said that in Dublin several hospitals combined to provide lecturers for their probationers. Each hospital paid £1 a year for each nurse, and the plan was found to work well. There were three courses of lectures in the year, and

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