

system, and as long as that system lasts, the world is flooded with a mass of unacknowledged nurses.

Until there is arranged some uniform code of education for nurses in which all hospitals must participate; until the country hospitals have a chance of competing with the Metropolitan ones; until there is a central board of examiners, hold-regular examinations for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year nurses, the passing of which examinations, shall determine the nurse's certificate and on the contrary, hinder her from following her profession; I say that until that time comes, so long will Cottage Hospitals struggle to employ the services of Probationers, whose inexperience is as detrimental to the hospital as the hospital's experience is to the probationer's future career.

When that time comes, as come it will, I see that all hospitals must offer to their nurses equal advantages. They must offer experience, literature, lectures and demonstrations. They must also provide for them a Matron capable of her duty of class teaching.

Such advantages as these, are out of the question with Cottage Hospitals and for these reasons, I feel convinced that such help as is required by Matrons of small hospitals, shall be paid and experienced assistance, and that the services of Probationers should be discontinued.

The public must be taught the fact that the future nurse must go through as regular a training, with the same opportunities of education and examinations, as have the women of other professions, and those localities which support Cottage Hospitals must also support efficient nursing for the same.

I have put this difficulty before this Conference merely as a question. For the sake of helping many a Matron of a Cottage Hospital, may I venture to ask for other opinions than mine on the subject. At present, I can only repeat that it is better for all concerned that probationers should not be received in hospitals of less than 40 beds, and that Matrons in such institutions should have the experienced help of a fully-trained nurse.

DISCUSSION.

Miss Isla Stewart (London) said the question raised by Miss Scott's paper was a very serious one. One thing was indisputable, it was impossible to give so thorough a training in the small as the large hospitals, and she did not consider that it was admissible for small hospitals of forty beds or so to be used for training purposes. It was impossible to gain the experience necessary to make a thoroughly efficient nurse in these small hospitals, and the strict and useful discipline of the large training schools could not be so well maintained in the smaller institutions. Miss Stewart thought that most of those present would agree with the views ably set forth by Miss Scott on this question.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick (London) said that the special hospitals, even small ones, were of very great value, not only to the public but to the Probationer. From personal experience she felt very grateful that her training in Children's Nursing had been obtained in a small (twenty-four beds) special hospital; the arrangements for the treatment of children were much more complete in a hospital organised for their special requirements, than she had found them in the Children's Wards of many General Hospitals. This was also her experience in the treatment and nursing of other specialities, and the question brought forward by Miss Scott was of great value, as it proved the necessity of a better system of co-operation between large and small hospitals. There was no doubt that the small general hospitals, to which Miss Scott's question specially applied, found very great difficulty in obtaining Probationers to train, because the experience to be obtained in a small hospital could not be compared with the practical experience to be gained in a large school, and naturally candidates would go where the educational course was most complete, and the certificate of more value. Mrs. Fenwick thought that ultimately more co-operation would be necessary between groups of hospitals, whereby Probationers could gain a wider experience in specialities. She thought that the smaller general and Cottage Hospitals would have to use more and more skilled labour, and act less and less as training schools; this would increase the expense of management, but the result would be more satisfactory.

Mrs. Fenwick said she was very pleased to observe that Miss Scott was convinced of the certainty of still further educational organisation in the Nursing Profession; and that she recognised that public and impartial examinations for nurses were inevitable; for herself, she saw little hope of appreciable improvement in any direction until those responsible for the care of the sick co-operated loyally and unselfishly for the common good.

Miss Harrison (Southport) said that she had had charge of a small hospital where she was not allowed the assistance of a trained nurse. She had two untrained probationers, and she had many critical cases. She also was required to do the housekeeping, and dispensing, and to attend to about seventy out-patients daily. She held the position for nearly two years. She said that one reason of the difficulty which was experienced by the small hospitals in obtaining probationers was that the larger hospitals often objected to accepting them afterwards. She considered that more well trained nurses should be utilised in the smaller hospitals.

Miss Stewart (London) said she wondered Miss Harrison had survived to relate her experiences.

Miss Creighton (London) said that while the subject of smaller hospitals was being discussed, she should like to say that she was the first nurse who had had charge of a small hospital of eight beds where Red Indian girls were trained. She would like to speak to their aptitude for nursing. When she read the article in the NURSING RECORD, not long since, on Indians as nurses she must say it went to her heart. She, herself, was responsible for a good deal of outside nursing, besides that of the hospital. She worked in the hospital from seven to nine in the nursing, and then went off on her rounds quite contented to leave the hospital in the charge of her Indian pupils. She did

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