

and the nurses. She agreed with Miss Breay's excellent proposal for such co-operation—especially as it was not suggested to sacrifice the interest of the nurses by the arrangement. Daily nurses were becoming more and more popular as the system became known to doctors and patients, and nursing in flats, lodgings, and hotels would no doubt greatly develop on these lines.

Miss Mollett (Southampton) said that she had been listening for some suggestion from Miss Breay as to a scheme for providing Home Hospitals for the Middle Classes, and she was disappointed that there was no such suggestion contained in the paper. It was certain, however, that hospital accommodation of some sort should be available for the middle classes, either in Home Hospitals, or in General Hospitals; for her own part she could not see why some beds in the general hospitals should not be placed at the disposal of the middle classes, on a graduated scheme of payment according to their means. This arrangement held good in Germany where the middle classes were admitted into the General Hospitals in small wards of four or six beds, and the plan worked admirably. She could not understand why the middle classes, who largely helped to support the general hospitals, should not have some small advantage from them.

Miss Poole (Blackburn) said that in Dublin a paying hospital was worked by four or five doctors on business principles, it was a company which paid 7 per cent. The patients were charged from 14s. to £3 3s. a week. The doctors performed operations there at a fee regulated by what the patient could afford. Medical men were very glad to get on to the staff of this hospital.

Miss Stewart (London) said that although the hospitals were supported to a great extent by the middle classes, the money given was subscribed for the benefit of the poor, and she did not think that those responsible for its expenditure would be justified in sanctioning its use for any other class of persons.

Miss Mollett (Southampton) said that it was open to the Charity Commissioners to alter the fundamental rules of public institutions.

Miss Stewart (London) drew attention to the fact that in supplying daily nurses to the public there would be a difficulty in efficiently providing for the suburbs, as it would be quite impossible for these nurses to visit over a large area. There was also the difficulty of visiting nurses making their work a financial success, and the question as to what work would be open to them when they gave up daily nursing. There was no doubt that at present the poor had the very best nursing, and medical attendance for which those who were in a better position had to pay a big fee. Even if the middle classes were admitted into general hospitals at a fee of £1 1s. a week, which was an unremunerative one, there were very many who would not care to avail themselves of it as they were averse to entering a general ward. She thought, therefore, that considering the matter from all points of view, the daily nurse was probably the best solution to the efficient nursing of the middle classes.

Miss Rosina Graham (Richmond) thought that the old endowed hospitals, St. Bartholomew's, Guy's and St. Thomas's should be utilized for the hospital accommodation of the middle classes. They were

founded originally by the liberality of a few people for the poor, but this was in the days before poor rates were known. Now the middle classes paid rates in order that the poor might be well cared for, and well nursed, in poor law infirmaries; and, undoubtedly, many of the cases which are admitted to our general hospitals should be cared for by the poor law. She was of opinion, therefore, that the administration of the poor law infirmaries should be reformed, that the class of patients for which they are provided should be sent to them, and that the constitutions of the endowed hospitals should be altered so that that they may be utilized for the care of the middle classes. She thought that if the question of payment were left to their honour, the middle classes would pay what they could afford for hospital treatment. As an instance of the difficulty of nursing the middle classes in their own houses, Miss Graham said that one elderly woman whom she attended in her own house died of a fractured leg because she would not be properly nursed.

Miss Pell-Smith (Leicester) said that one difficulty of organising efficient daily nursing was to know how the patients were to be nursed at night; she would be very glad if Miss Breay had any suggestions to make on that point.

Miss Breay in replying said she was inclined to agree with Miss Mollett that the rules of general hospitals might be somewhat more elastic than they were at present as to the admission of the middle classes. The term "poor" required definition, and persons whose whole year's income would be swallowed up in a few weeks, if they paid for skilled medical attendance and nursing for a necessary operation, might, she thought, be included in the category.

With regard to the Home Hospital which Miss Poole had quoted, she thought it would be a matter of great interest to know more about the way in which it was managed. She did not think it would be possible to make a home hospital in the West End of London remunerative at the same rate of payment. She thought that if visiting nursing were to be organised on at all an adequate basis it would have to be done by means of central homes on the same lines as the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute was worked. Miss Graham's interesting suggestion deserved consideration, but it was a somewhat dangerous proceeding to alter fundamental constitutions. With regard to Miss Pell-Smith's question she did not think that it could be considered that daily nursing was efficiently organised until there was a night as well as a day service of nurses provided.

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## The Plague.

WE are told that plague patients in India prove themselves grateful to their nurses when once they understand that they desire their welfare. One nurse was recently presented, upon leaving the hospital of which she had been in charge, with a pretty little silver teapot, of native workmanship. Much distress still prevails amongst the natives, and the nurses are thankful for gifts of money, which they can apply to the relief of those natives with whom their work brings them in contact, who are in great need,

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