

able paper, read by Miss Mary E. May, which appeared in this journal last year. The discussion on this paper proves that, in the opinion of the majority of our American colleagues, they are at one with those of us in this country who claim that the nursing of the insane must be grounded on a general nursing education, and they deprecate the suggestion of accepting training in the care of special diseases as an efficient basis of training in nursing, any more than in medicine. A Committee of five Matrons was appointed to consider this important question of mental nursing, and it will present a Report at this year's Annual Meeting, which, we are sure, will be most valuable to those really anxious for the more efficient care of the insane.

DISCUSSION ON MISS MAY'S PAPER.

"The Work of Nursing the Insane."

Miss McMillian, Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland:—

I have been asked to give a short account of the methods of nursing adopted at the Kankakee Hospital for the Insane. Owing to the fact that I have never been in Kankakee, have never seen the hospital, and, until two short weeks ago, have had only a dim knowledge of its existence, I am compelled to beg for your clemency for the paper, and regret, with you, that a subject worthy of being presented at more length and in greater detail, should from necessity be dealt with in the following manner:

Looking through the schedule of lectures and demonstrations provided for the training school in connection with the Illinois Eastern Hospital, we come to the conclusion that the graduates sent out from the school must be well equipped to nurse the sick, either in mind or body. We find that the text book on nursing which is used is one common to most of the training schools for nurses, namely, "Hampton's Principles and Practice of Nursing." If this be intelligently followed, as without doubt it is, the methods adopted for the care of the bodily sick are precisely those which we ourselves have been taught, and are now teaching. Other text books, used in common, are "Kimber's Anatomy" and "Groff's Materia Medica." So far, our schools for nurses stands on a level with the Kankakee training school, and we show knowledge for knowledge. But, just here we loiter, and let the hospital for the insane pass us by; for, having instructed their pupils in the care of the body, they pass to the more interesting and difficult study, that of the mind. For assistance in this subject, Harding's text book on mental nursing is used. The main dependence, however, is placed on a hand-book published by the authority of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland. It is called "The Hand Book for Attendants on the Insane," and is closely followed at Kankakee.

The practical training of the pupil nurse in Kankakee, as elsewhere, is in the wards and by the actual care of the patients. Accompanying this is the theoretical instruction, consisting for the first year in class demonstrations entirely, these being about forty-eight in number. The Kankakee junior class instruction is very similar to that of the junior year in most training

schools for nurses, with the addition of a short course on the theory of the care of the insane, and the disorders of the mind.

The senior, or second year, course may be taken by those pupils who have successfully passed an examination on the junior year work. The second year is also thrown open to graduates of good standing from training schools for nurses, who, however, must pass an entrance examination equivalent to that necessary to secure a teacher's second grade certificate. During this year a special and thorough course is given in massage and in the methods of preparing and carrying out the Russian and Turkish baths. Instruction in cooking is also given, and practical demonstration in bandaging.

An extensive course of lectures in anatomy and physiology is received by the pupils, these lectures being assisted by practical demonstrations at autopsies. Each nurse is required to attend at least three autopsies. At the first of these the anatomy of the body is demonstrated; at the second, physiology is particularly taken up; and at the third, a demonstration in pathology is given.

The theoretical instruction in this second year consists, in all, of about ninety recitations and lectures, and comprises lectures on elementary surgery and general diseases, hydrotherapy, emergencies, nervous and mental diseases, urinalysis, toxicology, etc. There is also a lecture given on dentistry and the care of the teeth, and a short course on the eye, ear, nose, and throat.

Insane nursing proper and the special methods to be adopted in successfully dealing with the diseased mind are considered, not only in the lectures on nervous and mental diseases, but also in an interesting course on psychology, dealing with such subjects as the methods of psychology and their application to the study of insanity; the senses and their disorders; memory and its disorders; diseases of the imagination or the will; disorders of the emotions, etc. Such a course of lectures as this last, comprising, as it does, so much cannot but be of inestimable benefit to the nurse, whether she be a nurse for the insane or not, and through her to the patient. How much wider an interest in humanity in general and in her own patient has she, who is capable of understanding, if only in an elementary degree, the mental frailties common to human nature. How much more lenient can she be with the petty tempers which so often accompany the weak body and, in short, how much better and more successful a nurse, and how much stronger a woman is she who is blessed with the power of this knowledge!

I repeat, that, having carefully studied the plan of teaching adopted at the Kankakee Hospital for the insane, the impression vividly remains that the course is such as to produce nurses thoroughly instructed in the modern methods of the care of the sick, and in addition, to send forth graduates who have been given every opportunity of absorbing tact and wisdom in dealing with the mind diseased. It seems, also, that its tendency is to aid the pupil towards attaining those rare and enviable attributes—leniency and patience towards human imperfections and tenderness towards its frailties. If such results be aimed at and attained, if even only in part, then indeed have the authorities of Kankakee Hospital solved the problem of what nursing, in its true sense, means.

(To be continued.)

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