

In 1877 the Municipal Council of Paris, wishing the hospitals to be properly attended and the patients cleverly nursed, decided to open schools for nurses (of both sexes), and to gradually replace the nuns by lay nurses in the civil hospitals of the towns.

But this assembly of *men*, though clever enough and lovers of progress, did not understand at all the requisites to get proper training for nurses. Lectures were begun, made by clever doctors who spoke on medical subjects, *not nursing*, and any one, even devoid of elementary instruction, was allowed to attend. A class for learning reading and writing was opened for those who wanted to learn just enough to be able to write the examination papers! They mostly were men and women working all day long in the hospitals, *not only in the wards*, but even in the post-mortem rooms or stables, linenry, washhouse, etc., etc.

There was no link between the hospital ward work and the school. The diploma of nursing might be obtained after eight months attendance at the lectures, and successful examination papers which might be tried over and over again. In one case a male nurse attempted the examinations every year for nine years before getting the diploma, though these papers were written at any time the candidate wished to and without much guarantee of honest personal work.

The hospitals did not make it a rule of engaging only nurses who had the diploma or wished to work for it, and the diploma holders being mostly devoid of education, did not get the best posts. No practical training was given in the wards and the actual state of the Paris hospitals proves it at one glance.

The *personnel* is so very unsteady that we find in the year 1898 that there were fourteen dismissals in the hospitals of Salpêtrière, Bicêtre, Pitié Lariboisière of male and female nurses for drunkenness, disobedience, neglect, idleness, misconduct, etc., etc.

This shows what a poor result the nursing schools opened more than twenty years before had given.

The nurses are allowed to marry, and we find cases of man and wife, both nurses, sleeping in dormitories! When there are children the case is still worse and ward work more than ever neglected.\*

This attempt made in Paris in the hope of getting a properly trained staff led to two results: (a) a few other French towns (eight to ten at most) followed in with the same plan and unsatis-

\* On entering the Paris hospitals a would-be nurse has to work three years as probationer, five years as nurse, two years as staff nurse, two years as under-ward surveyor, two years as ward surveyor. If numerous punishments have been inflicted, more years are added to the above. But it is not a rule even for those who have been more than fourteen years in service to hold the good posts! They are given to outsiders!

factory results; (b) the others decided to uphold the nun system rather than have those lay-nurses whose loose morals are too well known.

A nursing school for girls has existed since 1889 at the *Protestant House of Health at Bordeaux*. But the probationers were not provided with proper accommodation, did not care to stay on, the nursing staff was more like a set of servants, and there was no training given, besides the theoretical lectures.

(In May, 1901, the management of this school of nurses has been given over to me, and it is being set on a proper footing for lady probationers, and has properly trained nurses to instruct them.)

Free and paying probationers are received for two years' training. Lectures made by doctors, and examinations passed before professors of the medical faculty.

The hospital holds sixty-eight beds for men, women, and children, and an important outpatient and accident department.

In Paris a nursing school was opened in 1899 for girls of good education. It is under the care of the *Society for Helping the Sick*. The probationers are sent in the Paris hospital at the time the visiting doctors go round, that is all the hospital training they get! Girls have to engage themselves for eight years, of which two are spent in training (?) and the other six in attending paying patients in private houses.

There are in France a great many so called nursing lectures organized by Red Cross Societies, which are attended by fashionable ladies who never go in for any kind of practical training, and only attend hospitals at the time the visiting doctors go their round.

They very often go through theoretical examinations, hold diplomas and medals, notwithstanding their want of experience in real nurses' work, and moreover all expect to hold the most important posts in future ambulances!

The *Superior Council of Assistance Publique* of France took into consideration the want of proper nursing staffs in all French hospitals, in 1898. Several men doctors were asked to draw up a programme of studies for nurses. This lengthy programme has been published, and shows the utter ignorance of these medical men of what the training of a nurse should be.

Notwithstanding, the *Council*, with its high authority, published a paper asking all the hospitals of France to instruct their nursing staffs after this programme. Until now (August, 1901) only one town has responded to this appeal. A great many town authorities have taken up the subject, for everywhere dissatisfaction is felt at the actual deplorable state of French hospitals.

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