

Nursing Echoes.

* * * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



A glance at the calendar reminds us that it is five-and-twenty years ago to-day, the 1st of April—a most appropriate day for so foolish a step, as we were at the time informed—since, taking ourselves very seriously, we began our training at the Children's Hospital at Nottingham. A quarter of a century! It seems almost incredible, so distinctly do we remember every event of that memorable day. It was a showery, flowery day, and as we took a farewell walk before breakfast through the old-fashioned garden we remember how little showers of crystal rain-drops dripped off the grey-green, uncurling leaves and fell refreshingly upon hot cheeks, and in crossing the home paddock how the wet clay soil clung to one's feet and sucked off one shoe, and how difficult it was to replace it wobbling on one leg.

Then we had always been told that pug-dogs had no sense nor feeling, a horrible libel so far as our own black-nosed pet puggie was concerned, or why should he have wept real tears at what he must have known instinctively was in truth good-bye? Or why should he have refused food, and pined and lost his pretty pink rotundity, so that it became necessary to beg a "doggie" Lady Superintendent for permission to have him pay a few days' visit to the hospital, just to see that his "missus" was alive. And then to witness his joy. How he bounded into the ward and dashed round and round, taking flying leaps over and on to the children's cots, to the huge and screaming delight of even the "ip cares."

And then the keen disappointment, when one retired to a nice, clean little bed-chamber, with a springy "comfy" bed to sleep in, after having been made to eat—by an eminently sane and sprightly person—a well-cooked late dinner, at which two vegetables, instead of husks, were served! No conventual restrictions, no hair shirt, no hard pallet. All, all just the same common-place, human environment inside the hospital gates as outside in the street, where, if one wished to do one's duty, one must be very human and somewhat common-place—a lesson very difficult to appreciate, and yet how imperative.

Ah, well! one could meander through innumerable columns, touching on the kaleidoscopic sensations of this never-to-be-forgotten First Day, but space forbids. It is swept with uncountable sad and sunny hours into past æons of time. There let it rest.

A lively discussion took place at the Pioneer Club, Grafton Street, last week, on the proposition introduced by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick: "That it is desirable that Trained Nurses should be Registered by the State." Mrs. Collier, who was in the chair, on inviting discussion, said she could not imagine any case for the opposition. However, Miss Ritchie, in a spirited speech, brought forward a danger she foresaw in the interference of the State with the liberty of the home. Another speaker expressed the opinion that the General Medical Council had done much to stultify medical progress, and expressed the fear that the formation of a Nursing Council would have the same effect on the nursing profession. Miss M. H. E. Clarke warmly supported the arguments advanced by Mrs. Fenwick. Another speaker said that from the point of view of a member of the profession of teaching, registration would be of great benefit to it, and she supposed the effect would be the same in relation to nurses. Dr. Annie McCall raised the question of the nursing of the middle classes. While the poor would be well nursed in hospitals, and the rich would be able to command the services of thoroughly skilled and registered nurses, she foresaw a difficulty in connection with the middle classes who could not afford the fees of the registered nurse. Miss Brey said that registration would benefit trained nurses, but it would be of equal benefit to the public. She could not conceive the latter tolerating the present condition of things for a day.

In replying to the various points raised, Mrs. Fenwick said that if nurses were registered there could be no possible interference with the liberty of the home. If the public preferred to employ amateurs they would be at liberty to do so. But registration would afford protection from unqualified nurses to those who desired it and, at present, had no adequate means of discriminating as to the sufficiency of a nurse's training.

While not agreeing with the speaker who thought that the formation of the General Medical Council had been prejudicial to progress, she said that its defects arose from the lack of direct representation of registered practitioners. With the exception of five members, the General Medical Council was composed of representatives of medical and official bodies, not of the elected representatives of qualified practitioners. She hoped that whenever the General Nursing Council was formed a majority of the

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