

and the other side of the question is, how can it be done if pupils are not sent? Unfortunately, as I have said, there is no visiting nursing organisation in the city to which I have referred. There is one paid nurse for tuberculosis work, and there is some volunteer nursing in connection with a Settlement. The registered nurses of the city realise the gravity of the situation, and they are considering the advisability of supporting one of their number for district work.

"There is in another city a nurse's club, whose members are required to do some charity work each year. Physicians who use this club registry for their paying patients may obtain nurses for their charity patients also, those whose names are at the foot of the list being sent in response to calls. One of the distinctive features of a profession is thus emphasised—a calling in which money is not the first consideration."

In the discussion which followed on the reading of the paper, it is interesting to get at the opinions of some of the women who are laying the foundation of the great profession of Nursing in the States.

Miss Sophia Palmer thought that sending pupils out for a few weeks of district work in the latter part of the third year was a great advantage to some nurses; that there was such a thing as too much hospital, too much discipline, too rigid a life for some temperaments; that it destroyed originality in a few and blunted the sympathies of others, and that a little glimpse into the homes of the people was an excellent experience, especially to a nurse who was to be placed in charge of a public ward, where such knowledge made her more appreciative of the home problems of her patients. She endorsed all Miss Keith had said in regard to the difficulties, but thought there were advantages from the humanitarian and social side that counterbalanced the objections.

Miss Riddle, speaking for the Newton Hospital, said: "We are planning to try district nursing in what may be called a country city, the chief object being for the reasons Miss Palmer has stated. We hope to make our pupils better acquainted with the homes and conditions from which the patients have come to us, to do good work for the patients in such homes, and we also hope that some good will react upon the hospital."

Miss Annie Damer said: "I think more and more that the district nurse is becoming a very important factor in the sphere of social economics, and more and more it is being demonstrated that she is a very valuable factor, but to become so she requires sufficient training and special adaptability. I do not want to say very much on this subject. I am not a Superintendent, but I have had a little experience in district work. You ladies have all come to the conclusion that it is not advisable to send your pupils out into the homes of the rich during that period of training. You agree that the

nurse must become schooled in the art of nursing or in the technique of her work before she begins to practise it outside. Then why should you send your pupils out to practise it in the homes of the poor when you are unwilling to send them into the homes of the rich?

"Two years was not considered time enough to train her to become a competent nurse. Three years now are required, and the time is all needed in the hospital. A nurse cannot be trained for district work in the hospital. She needs there to be schooled and trained and made ready to practise her profession anywhere, but going into the homes of the poor requires another kind of training and a special adaptability is needed. All women are not capable of doing that work, and, as Miss Keith has said, you will find a very large proportion of the nurses who are sent out to do that work are not fitted for it at all, and they cannot adapt themselves to it.

"If it is at all possible, there should be added to the curriculum of every training-school a course of lectures on the special work that is being done by philanthropists and sociologists in the world at large for the poor and needy and destitute in our great cities. It has been begun in one school in New York City. The Committee on District Nursing are planning to co-operate with the School of Philanthropy, and instead of having lecturers go to the different schools, it is hoped that pupils can come together at some central point for these lectures. I find that many of the nurses who come to do district work have spent three years in a training-school in New York, but they know nothing about the city, or where the poor live that they have met every day in the hospital, and they know nothing of the great needs that a nurse as a social worker has to understand. She must not only have the knowledge necessary for private nursing and hospital nursing, but she must understand the needs of the poor and the methods that are considered best for their relief. I have known Superintendents to say to a graduate undertaking district nursing, 'Why, you are a graduate; you can do anything,' but when she gets into the work she finds she is not fitted for it. I have had letters from nurses saying, 'I would just love to do that work,' but if they love to do it they would be doing it in some capacity; they would not be waiting for an opportunity with a salary.

"In New York City some of the district nurses have taken the summer course in philanthropy. I have had a little experience with pupil nurses in the work. No woman can learn it in one or two months. She had better have two years, and then she thinks she knows less than when she began; in two months' time she is only beginning to get the groundwork of it and to have a little knowledge of the home. I feel especially for the patients. Do not begin to think that your hospitals and training-

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