

details of the nursing of the consumptive. These will doubtless be ably dealt with by some of the experienced workers here present.

It has been my chief aim in the few minutes permitted me in opening the Discussion, to indicate something of the opportunities opening to the well-trained, far-seeing, patriotic nurse for a participation in a work of infinite possibilities for the individual and incalculable importance to the State.

I trust our conference to-night will go far to stimulate our ambition and will do much to energise our nursing service so that we may take our proper place in the great Anti-Tuberculosis Campaign.

SOME POINTS IN THE NURSING OF PHTHISIS AMONGST THE POOR.

MISS HELEN TODD.

Dr. Kelynack was followed by Miss Helen Todd, Matron of the Royal National Sanatorium for Consumption, Bournemouth, who presented an interesting paper on "Some Points in the Nursing of Phthisis among the Poor," in which she emphasised one special feature of the nurse's work which is all important, but which is apt to be little thought of. She showed the marked difference between the length of the patients' stay in sanatoria for the wealthy and for the working classes. For instance, in the former case one sanatorium quotes the terms by the year, in the latter a prolonged stay is out of the question and the patient's term can only be reckoned by weeks.

There are two financial causes for this, the patient's means, and the state of the funds of the institution and the manner in which it is supported. In dealing with the poorer class of patients it must be borne in mind (1) that in their ignorance they are largely responsible for spreading the disease, not only in their own families, but also amongst the community at large; (2) that they cannot, as a rule, afford to give up their employment whilst the disease is in an early stage and they are still capable of earning money; (3) that they cannot afford to remain in institutions when once they feel capable of working, even in a desultory manner.

At the Bournemouth Sanatorium patients are admitted for eight weeks, which may be extended at the option of the visiting physician, but it is found that both men and women often feel compelled to return home contrary to medical advice on account of urgent home duties.

Miss Todd therefore urged the necessity of organising the nursing of such patients with the view of educating them to lead as healthy

lives as possible in the unhygienic surroundings to which they return, and, "prevention being better than cure," of showing them how the risk of infection to those around them may best be minimised.

Unless this can be done the mere fact of a patient's sojourn for a few weeks in a Sanatorium will, Miss Todd holds, tend to increase rather than to diminish tubercular disease, for his life being prolonged he will be for a longer period of time than would otherwise be the case a source of possible and probable infection and danger.

Therefore it is part of the duty of the nurses at the Royal National Sanatorium, Bournemouth, to instruct the patients in the reasons for care in dealing with expectoration, for keeping the finger nails short, for ablutions before meals, etc., and the women are taught the danger of dust and dirt, and the advisability of great care as to the health of their children.

Miss Todd holds that the nursing in no Sanatorium can be considered well organised unless there is some systematic attempt, by lectures or otherwise, to teach the rationale of cleanliness, and the best methods of procuring it.

DISCUSSION.

The discussion was opened by Dr. Mabel Paine, Assistant Medical Officer at the Chelsea Infirmary, who strongly urged the importance of the care and education of the poor consumptive. She said it was this class who were the greatest danger to their fellow citizens, for poverty entailed overcrowding in small ill-ventilated rooms, and defective sanitary arrangements.

It was also this class who generally indulged in the habit of promiscuous spitting, and dried sputum was the great source of infection. The poor consumptive, she said, we have always with us, not only confined to his own quarters, but mingling with the healthy in their public meeting places, their shops and their amusements, exemplifying the enormous power for evil which may be all unconsciously exercised by those ignorant of their duty to their neighbours. Dr. Paine referred to the extremely limited accommodation provided in Sanatoria for consumptives who cannot afford to pay practically nothing for their support, because their income ceases with their power of working, and to their necessarily short stay, but said that there was no doubt that even a short time spent in a Sanatorium under strict supervision by nurses and doctors has a powerful educative influence so that even a short stay in a Sanatorium would be advisable for every consumptive, but, for the present there was no likelihood of the realisation of this desirable state of things and so the great hope of the future lay in the spread of the knowledge of the rules of health. This educational work could be largely done by nurses who could do so much to inculcate higher

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