

By MRS. HAMPTON ROBB.

Mrs. Hampton Robb, who was present, gave a brief and most interesting survey of the movement for organisation in the United States of America. Mrs. Robb said that the first steps for organisation were taken at the time of the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893, when the formation of a Superintendents' Society was discussed. What form this organisation would take they did not then know, but from the first the Superintendents' Society had stood for educational standards.

With regard to the organisation of nurses, Mrs. Robb said that she was a graduate of Bellevue Hospital, New York, and that when she trained, Bellevue nurses considered themselves superior to any others. On one occasion two or three of the nurses got together and wondered what the New York Hospital was like, and discussed the possibility of visiting it. They were told (not by the Superintendent) that it would not be safe to do this, as they would probably be dismissed the School. That was the feeling in 1891. The Superintendents did not know one another, or what it meant to get together, and the nurses only knew certain members of their own class. When, therefore, an Association of nurses was first discussed, it was a difficult problem to get graduates interested enough to speak to one another. A beginning, however, was made and Alumnae Associations were formed. When these numbered 31, a Report was made to the Society of Superintendents when it met at Boston, and the Associated Alumnae was formed. In 1897 this had its first meeting in New York. At the second or third meeting, when it included practically every Superintendent in the country, it was then decided that the time had come for the State to consider the State Registration of Nurses for the benefit of the public, and the benefit of nurses. State Societies were organised to obtain registration in 29 States, and laws were passed in 1903 in four States, a number now increased to fifteen.

Two States lost because women are not allowed to hold public office, and others lost on account of the opposition of medical men, who considered that they should have seats on the Governing Board. The State Associations felt strongly that the Board should be composed of nurses only. The question as to whether nursing should be regarded as a profession or no had been settled by the demands made upon it in consequence of the advancement of scientific medicine.

No outside people understood the needs of a body of professional workers, or knew how to deal with them better than the members of that profession. Mrs. Robb concluded by saying that she thought the educational standards to be required of a trained nurse should be defined, and that a State Registered Nurse should stand for the same thing and the same work all over the world.

THE NURSES' REGISTRATION ACT IN GERMANY.

By SISTER CHARLOTTE VON CAEMMERER.

Sister von Caemmerer said that though the Nurses' Registration Act in Germany, which came into force on June 1st, only demanded one year's training, German nurses were glad to have even this term of training recognised by the State. Until the present time any woman could easily pass an examination set her by a doctor, and then put on a uniform and call herself a certificated nurse. Now the nurses who pass the State Examination will be protected by the words "recognised by the Government," and will receive a badge or some other outward sign not yet definitely decided upon, but no one will be able to use this distinctive mark illegally without being prosecuted. Registration is not compulsory, but the law as it stands is expected to effect great good for German nurses, who hope soon to show the Government that the one year's term of training is insufficient, and to get one or two more years added, as is done already by the German Nurses' Association in hospitals nursed by its members.

The examination will be held twice a year in some 60 hospitals in all parts of Prussia, and other places in the various German States. The Committee will consist of three doctors, one Government official, and at least one teacher of a training school for nurses. Candidates must be 21 years of age, and must submit, in their own handwriting, testimonials as to health, education, and training. The examination will be oral and practical, lasting for three days, and including one night of night duty. Candidates who fail once may have a second chance, but not more.

Until June 1st, 1908, nurses who have been in practice for five years, can be recognised without examination. German nurses fear that the organisation of these examinations will be difficult as the members to be examined will soon be many, and from a practical point of view they fear that it will not be easy to arrange for the relays of candidates to do the work in the wards of hospitals for three days at a time, for a period extending, perhaps, over a whole month, as only six will be admitted at once.

Sister von Caemmerer said that the practical and theoretical part of the curriculum is well arranged, but there is no mention of the ethical side. She thinks, however, that it is, perhaps, well to leave this to the Matrons, so that they may show the real worth of their part of the training.

MISS CHAPTAL.

Miss Chaptal here explained briefly in French the points in the previous papers, and the movement in England and in America for registration by the State, which had resulted in the United States in the establishment of registration in fifteen States. She agreed with Mrs. Hampton Robb that the curriculum of training for nurses should be the same all the world over, and its control should be adopted by all the countries of the world.

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