

specialists in some particular part of their work ; whether they should be, in fact, women exclusively devoted to nursing Fever, Mental, Medical, Surgical, and Obstetric cases respectively ; one set of Nurses exclusively for children, another for adults ; one class set apart solely for night duty, and another for day work. Mr. Haward noted how the tendency now-a-days is for Physicians and Surgeons to become specialists for the treatment of the disease of some particular organ of the body, and he queried whether it was likely—and, if so, whether it was advisable—that Nurses should undertake equally restricted fields of work. But whether this were so or not, he urged the necessity of every Nurse first obtaining a thorough training in general work, just as no Medical man can obtain his qualification to practice without going through a complete curriculum of study.

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MR. ANDREW CLARK, the popular Lecturer and Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, who occupied the chair, opened the discussion by commenting upon some of the drawbacks of specialism in medicine, and expressed his opinion that, so far as general Medical and Surgical work went, Nurses would never in any large number become specialists. Miss Wood considered that it would be harmful to Nurses, both in health and in the interest of their work, if they were placed on permanent night duty. She considered that the better plan was to give each Nurse only a fixed share of night duty during each year ; and remarked that this was the principle generally adopted, though its details as to length varied very greatly in general and special Hospitals throughout the country. She mentioned also that Union Infirmaries were now gradually adopting the same system, as they improved their Nursing in other respects.

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Miss Wood said that the subject was of great interest to the public as well as to Nurses. It was beginning to be better known that the primary and great aim of the Association was to improve the general training received by Nurses, as well as to insist that no one should be sent out to nurse the sick in private houses, who had not received a training sufficient to enable her to perform the duties efficiently which would there devolve upon her. But, on the other hand, there was a great and growing danger against which she felt impelled to protest most strongly, that the nursing of Hospital patients was hampered, if not sacrificed altogether, to the necessity of sending out Nurses for outside cases from the Wards of a Hospital.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK cordially endorsed all that Miss Wood had said. She told how the principle had been laid down at the first, and steadfastly adhered to ever since, at St. Bartholomew's, that the Private Nursing Staff should be quite separate and distinct from the Hospital In-patient Staff. Where this was not done they had many instances to prove that harm might result. But the point she would firmly insist upon was the iniquitous system of any charitable institution sweating its Nurses, for any purpose, however plausible. If there was a large profit from the Nurses' work it simply proved that the workers were underpaid, and that, on the face of it, was indefensible. It was quite fair that Probationers should be paid but small salaries, or even that they should pay something for their training. They obtain, in education, an invaluable return, and she had always told Nurses that they obtained in a large Hospital their education at infinitely less cost to themselves than they would be required to pay for being taught any other skilled trade or calling.

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BUT once their term of apprenticeship was over, she had always contended that Nurses should be treated fairly, and be given adequate reward for their labour. The principle had been adopted from the first at St. Bartholomew's, and each Private Nurse, in addition to a fixed and fair salary, was given a percentage of the amount earned by her work, increasing with the length of time she remained in the service of the Institution. But to sweat Trained Nurses was every whit as unjustifiable as to defraud the public by supplying it with untrained women. And she observed with the greatest pleasure that public feeling was being aroused upon the subject more rapidly than could have been anticipated, or hoped for.

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DR. HEYWOOD SMITH, MISS KNIGHT, and others took part in the discussion, the latter asking whether some plan could not be arranged whereby Private Nurses might during the summer take holiday duties in the Hospitals, and so keep themselves *au courant* with the most recent Nursing appliances. Miss Thomson spoke briefly of the advantages Private Nurses would derive from being able to brush up their knowledge by returning for short periods occasionally to Hospitals. MR. HAWARD replied to the various points raised by the speakers. DR. BEDFORD FENWICK proposed votes of thanks to Mr. Haward for his most interesting paper, and to Mr. Clark for taking the chair, and these having been accorded by most hearty acclamation, and duly acknowledged, a most interesting meeting was concluded.

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