

Arguing from one point of view it was quite possible to doubt the need of a nursing profession at all. Arguing from another, and from one, she believed, justified by results, it held an exceedingly important position in the treatment of disease.

Miss Mollett dealt with the general principles that govern the relations between the medical and nursing professions. She dwelt upon the fact that while nursing in its simplest form is older than medicine, in fact as old as humanity, it is to medicine we owe the endeavour to deal with disease and injury from a scientific standpoint. So it is to medicine that the nurse owes the fact that her work is no longer carried out in haphazard fashion, but in obedience to scientific principles. It is to her connection with medicine that she owes further the appreciation of the intellectual side of her work. At the same time Miss Mollett warned nurses against allowing the natural and legitimate interest they must take in the scientific side of their work as assistants of the physicians and surgeons, to obscure from them the fact, that no good doctor would wish them to forget, that they were first and foremost nurses. A nurse must never forget the old primæval instinct—old as the nursing instinct of motherhood—of compassion and pity for battered and diseased humanity. Whilst loyally endorsing the voluntary subordination of the nurse to the doctor, she reminded her hearers of the old saying: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," and whilst for the nurse the doctor was Cæsar, the patient was God.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SESSION said she was sure they had all listened with pleasure to Miss Mollett's interesting and inspiring words. She then called on Dr. Robert Sevestre, Assistant Physician at the Leicester Infirmary, to present his paper.

THE HISTORICAL, SCIENTIFIC, ETHICAL, AND PERSONAL RELATIONS OF NURSING AND MEDICINE.

DR. SEVESTRE said he would like to be amongst the first to congratulate Miss Mollett upon the paper she had just read, and to thank her, not only in his own name, but in the name of the medical profession, for her very courteous remarks concerning it.

HISTORICAL RELATION.

He proceeded to deal with the historical relation of nursing and medicine, which, he said, had been a close and constant one. It might be said to be a partnership in which nursing had always been the senior partner; thus Professor Osler in one of his writings mentioned a tradition of Eve nursing her

grandson Enoch, and instructing his mother, Mahala how to comfort and soothe him, a tradition which might well be believed to be true. An account of the time when women combined the two professions could, Dr. Sevestre said, be found in the histories of medicine, and, "in that charming book, 'A History of Nursing.'" He merely wished to direct attention to this aspect of the subject, for traditions were not only of value in helping to avoid mistakes, but also in forming ideals and inspirations for future efforts.

SCIENTIFIC RELATION.

One of the darkest periods in nursing was in the eighteenth century, and it was only in the last 50 years that nursing had risen to be a profession. The progress had been truly astounding, and one that very few people, even among doctors and nurses, realised or understood. This progress, moreover, was bound to be maintained, for as long as the science of medicine advanced, that of nursing would advance also, and the time could not be far distant when highly skilled nursing would be considered, more generally than at present, a branch of medicine.

In the training for medicine, and, indeed, for any science, keen observation and minute exactness of detail were most essential, and were early inculcated into the student, these very qualities were required in nursing, together with a knowledge of the laws of health, and of the normal functions of the human body obtained in the study of anatomy, physiology, and hygiene, subjects in which students of both medicine and nursing should be well grounded.

Dr. Sevestre contended that the need of scientific training for nurses should be more recognised, as its importance was becoming greater day by day. For instance, the majority of operations were completely dependent for their success on the aseptic environment of the patient, which depended on the most minute care and attention on the part of all brought in contact with him in any way.

Again, it was not only in surgical nursing that the scientific spirit was required. Skilled nursing was invaluable, but without keen observation, and trained intelligence to value correctly the facts observed, an early perforation in a case of enteric fever might be overlooked and many precious hours lost.

Sufficient attention was not always paid to this part of a nurse's training, different schools had different standards, and there was no recognised portal of entrance to the nursing profession. The gain would be great if there were a recognised standard of knowledge required as in the case of other professions. Troubles

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