

of the profession, she must be a very exceptional individual, and, if that is not possible, she must, at any rate, do her utmost to cultivate every faculty she possesses. This is not easy for any of us, but at any rate the nurse need never be discouraged by that which checks some people, that when they have developed their every gift they will find no field for its exercise.

A nurse can never bring too much skill and understanding and capacity to her work, and every addition to her general knowledge, every interest she cultivates, every intelligent observation she makes on social phenomena will make her a better nurse and a more valuable citizen. There can be no doubt of this, that every social worker, every one who puts her fingers into the machinery and interferes with the lives of others even for their good, should at any rate do her utmost to try to understand their world, its trend and tendency, so that her influence may constantly reinforce all those who are asking for social betterment. Finally, a nurse should never allow the professional interest in a case, still less the round of trivial or lowly duties, to efface from her mind the larger aspects of her purpose, of her work. When she ministers to the poorest old chronic, let her see herself representing that common brotherhood which binds society together; when she struggles for the eyesight of one poor fretful baby, let her see herself fighting for national efficiency. Then her thought will be not how unimportant is her daily work, or how limited are her opportunities; but how tremendous are her responsibilities, and her prayer will be: "Help me, my God, my boat is so small, Thy ocean is so large," and she will be lifted far above the humble and sometimes unlovely offices she performs to realise her comradeship with every worker and thinker who has served her time and generation.

As President of the Session, LADY HELEN MUNRO FERGUSON then called upon the reader of the first paper, and, in the regretted absence of Miss Nutting, Professor of Domestic Science at Teachers' College, Columbia University, Mrs. Hampton Robb presented the paper prepared by her on

PREPARATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL WORK.

Miss Nutting pointed out that in America there is a constant demand for nurses to take charge of hospitals, to organise and direct them, and there is much difficulty in securing properly qualified candidates. The positions are not unfrequently filled by women who are good nurses, but who are neither administrators, in any adequate sense of the word, nor teachers, in any sense of that word, who lament their lack of definite preparation for a post which in even the smallest hospital is important and responsible. It should not be necessary

for any young hospital Superintendent to begin her arduous career so untaught in the domestic side of her work as to cause her to write wildly back to her Alma Mater for information as to the cost of sheets, towels, and other similar articles, for points as to quality and quantities in purchasing, for details as to marking ink, or the particular kind of soap used in the laundry.

The preparation of nurses for these various responsibilities ought not, Miss Nutting said, to be a difficult or costly matter. The scattered and unused opportunities in the household and administrative departments of our hospitals would, if gathered together and welded into a carefully and logically arranged course of study and training, form a valuable part of such a preparation. These departments, with their daily routine, and equally with their daily emergencies, form an almost perfect laboratory for such practical training, and little would be required to convert them into valuable teaching fields, the need of which is clearly seen.

The first essential would be highly trained and competent heads of each of these housekeeping departments, capable of organising the work to admit of student assistants; and the second would be the teaching spirit, the desire to pass on to others accumulated stores of knowledge, every useful working detail wrung out of years of practical experience—a spirit which sees in such methods of teaching not a possible disturbance of cherished routine and system, but a great future good for our hospitals. No mere apprenticeship in any of these departments without careful systematic training will be suitable for our purpose.

THE NURSE AMONG THE POOR.

M^{LE}. CHAPTAL Directrice de la Maison Ecole des Infirmières Privées, Paris, presented an admirable paper on this subject. Work amongst the poor might, she said, be divided into several sections:—(a) Hygiene, pure and simple, with prophylaxis; (b) help to the poor, mothers and infants, tubercular patients, etc., through dispensary work; (c) district nursing in the homes of the poor. However great the zeal of a nurse to be of use, she will be compelled to take up one of these branches only. Though prevention is better than cure, prevention cannot accomplish everything and therefore assistance must help and almost always follow, in every kind of useful and effective work amongst the poor.

But prevention is the essential duty. By hygiene and prophylaxis morbidity and mortality can be lessened in a striking proportion. Thus, in a Paris slum tuberculosis and infantile mortality were rife up to 1900. From that time there had been a considerable decrease; thus, in 1900 the mortality from tuberculosis was 90.9 per 10,000, in 1907 it was 50.2. The infantile mortality in 1900 was 15.1 per cent; in 1907 10.7. This striking result has been attained from the work of a nurse.

Miss Chaptal said that when, some ten years ago she began to teach hygiene to the poor, she was rather alone. Now her pupils work with her, all helping in turn in the dispensaries, and two trained nurses doing district nursing, completing the work of the consultation by going to the homes to carry

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