

enormous mortality from tuberculosis; and gave, as the causes:—

1. Admission to the nursing profession of too young and delicate persons, or of those affected by hereditary taint.
2. Poor food and fasting, and lack of outdoor exercise.
3. Direct infection from patients or other nurses.
4. Overwork, aggravated by domestic service being demanded in addition to nursing duties; lack of recreation; and mental depression.
5. A stooping attitude, affecting the lungs.
6. Insanitary uniform.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

To deal with these conditions, Dr. Hecker suggested the adoption of the following recommendations of the German Nurses' Association, formulated at the International Hygiene Exhibition, in Dresden, last October:—

- (1) For the present, 10 hours' duty.
- (2) Distinct services for day and night duty.
- (3) A three years' term of training, as a transition at least two years.
- (4) The establishment of special courses of training for matrons and teachers.
- (5) The prohibition of non-certificated teachers in public institutions.
- (6) The years of services to be credited to a nurse on changing her position.
- (7) A sufficient State Insurance against accident.
- (8) Private official insurance.
- (9) Sufficient board wages during vacation.
- (10) The compilation of Government statistics, regarding the economic conditions of hospital staffs.
- (11) Undisturbed meals.
- (12) Strict selection, as in England, of healthy probationers, free from the hereditary taint of tuberculosis; the age of admission to be not under 20 and preferably 23.
- (13) Abolition of menial work unconnected with the patient; once a nurse has learnt how such work should be done, in order to supervise those under her, she should not be required to perform it, in order to save a servant's wages; a maternity nurse was expected to keep her hands smooth, and a general nurse should do the same.
- (14) Considerate treatment.

Once the conditions of nursing are improved, Dr. Hecker expressed the belief that there would be no lack of suitable candidates, and maintained that the concession of the points enumerated was possible, as evident from conditions in America, and also from the action taken by the Government Departments of Potsdam and South Alsace, and in other German hospitals. In the Government district of Cologne in 1902 the President of the Government issued an order to all hospitals which he controlled that "over-work should be avoided, and proper holidays provided." The following year a table of regulations was sent to the hospitals by the Board of Control which, amongst other things, provided that day and night nurses were to be relieved at regular intervals, that night nurses were to be allowed time for absolute rest until 6 o'clock the following day, and that nurses were to have an annual holiday of 14 days, to be

devoted entirely to recreation. When it was found that these orders were not carried out, a strict inquiry was made, and Dr. Ruhsack, in an interview with the Vicar General, requested that an ecclesiastical order should be issued prohibiting the nurses' holidays, which were to be a time of bodily recreation, from being spent in retreat. The result of the Vicar General's report to the Archbishop was a vote of thanks to Dr. Ruhsack, and the assurance that his request should be granted.

RECREATION HOMES.

Some Orders had gone the length of building recreation homes, and the Red Cross Society had made arrangements with no less than thirty-six watering places, sea and inland, by which its nurses could be received on reduced terms, and in some instances free. It must not, however, be forgotten that prevention is better than cure, and that those institutions which avoided overworking their staff were on the best economic basis.

Dr. Hecker mentioned that His Holiness the Pope (Pius X) is greatly interested in the question of the overwork of nurses. He has caused the organisation of a training school in Rome, and when he noticed that religious communities sent few pupils he issued strict orders that a certain number were to be sent annually, and declared "The nursing sisters are not there for the performance of menial work, but for the service of the sick."

The speaker then dealt briefly with the duties and position of the Matron, and further said that young doctors were, through ignorance, sometimes inconsiderate of nurses. The general public should not abuse the good nature of a nurse by accepting her services out of the sick room, and the nurse should be protected by the regulations under which she worked.

Dr. Hecker concluded by paying a high tribute to the work of the President of the International Council of Nurses, Sister Agnes Karll, "to whose thorough knowledge, burning zeal, untiring energy and unselfish devotion her colleagues owe so much." With the recognition of the need for reformation, the work is, he said, already begun.

The paper of which the above is only a very brief abstract, was listened to with the closest attention and interest.

The Chairman said she was sorry for those nurses who could not understand German and so missed Dr. Hecker's masterly treatise, the first, she believed, to deal with the question of overstrain in nurses from the scientific standpoint. She hoped it would be translated in its entirety and published in English. Germany had a monopoly of many good things, but it ought not to have a monopoly of Dr. Hecker. She remarked incidentally that America was no paradise for nurses, and congratulated the German Nurses' Association and German nurses generally on having secured so brave and fearless a supporter as Dr. Hecker, who

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