

but attractive, small pay, long hours, uncertain status. The uncertain status was largely due to the unorganised state of the profession and would be remedied with State Registration, but the results of this would not be at once evident to intending probationers. As a partial remedy the speaker welcomed Miss Haughton's proposal for a preliminary training college, as the life would bring with it a higher idea of the position and requirements of a nurse, giving a sense of dignity and responsibility to the probationer and to her conception of her work.

Miss Beatrice Kent thought a post graduate course very desirable, but the money question was quite a problem.

The Hon. Albinia Brodrick said that the speakers they had heard admitted grave defects in training. The education of the public was the first step towards reform. When the public demanded better nurses they would get them.

Miss Ramsden did not think there was much profit on pupils' fees, and therefore they could hardly be lowered.

Miss Wright did not see why maternity pupils should pay fees any more than pupils in general hospitals.

Miss Reeves said that in Ireland, which was a poor country, all nurses paid for their training.

The Chairman said it was evident from the discussion that the important point was finance. Education was a most expensive thing if it was to be worth anything, as it must be taught by experts. But it must be recognised by fathers that they had a responsibility to equip their daughters to earn their living as well as their sons. At the basis of the demand for the better education of nurses was the awakening of the professional conscience of women, who realised that they must give of their best to the sick, and could not do that unless they were properly instructed. They must bring the nurse up to the point when she had a right to touch the sacred sick body.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

##### PHYSICAL DEGENERACY.

Miss Butler, Matron of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, and Vice-President of the Irish Nurses' Association, presided at the Afternoon Session in the Large Hall, and said that tuberculosis (white plague) and venereal disease (black plague) were both responsible for physical degeneracy. This afternoon would be devoted to the study of the latter. Until lately the public and trained nurses were ignorant of the terrible disease which was working havoc in weakening manhood and destroying health. Knowledge was power, and it behoved every good nurse and good woman to take part in the battle against it.

##### BLACK PLAGUE, OR VENEREAL DISEASE.

The Hon. Albinia Brodrick, who presented the paper on this subject, was listened to with the

utmost attention, as she dealt with her subject in a masterly way. As we hope shortly to publish this paper verbatim we will only refer to it briefly in this issue. Miss Brodrick prefaced her remarks by saying that the cult of the body, is a present day craze—the cult that is of the body surface. Beyond this worship of the external lies the ever-increasing softness and love of pleasure, the self-indulgence, the need of smooth things and flowery ways which, carried to their logical outcome, spell the ending of the race, the extinction of the nation. Science, on the other hand, knew nothing of externals, and dug deep into causes, knowing well that if the root were sound so would the plant be, and sought Truth, not for the sake of the Truth alone, but as the sole foundation upon which could be built up the superstructure of knowledge, which was power.

Nurses were the handmaids of Science—of a true knowledge of Nature and of the laws of Nature, which were the laws of God. And if Science were a seeking for Truth, and we the handmaids of Science, it behoved us to recognise Truth when we found it, simply and fearlessly, to accustom ourselves to think courageously about that aspect of Truth with which it was the office of our profession to deal, the prevention of disease and death, the causes of disease and their uprooting, the laws of health, and, for that purpose of morality as the foundation of health, and, as worthy handmaidens of so grand a mistress, to be diligent workers in her service.

For us the time had gone past to be afraid, or ashamed, of calling things by their own names, or of avoiding a scientific subject because the outside world called it ugly. In this spirit Miss Brodrick presented a masterly review of her subject which she declared, and we think proved, claimed the attention of all thinking men and women.

Dr. Ella Webb thought it a splendid thing that the members of the nursing profession should take this matter up. Patients were much more inclined to talk to their nurses than their doctors, and nurses when the subject came up in conversation might, if they were tactful and discreet, do much good. She advocated the instruction of children in the laws of their bodies at a much earlier age than was usual at present, and thought that boys should learn something of the suffering entailed on women by vice. The average boy was thoughtless but warm-hearted, and as he grew older much of his sin against women was due to thoughtlessness and carelessness. She concluded by thanking Miss Brodrick for her paper, which was the best she had ever heard read on the subject.

##### THE WORK OF THE TRAINED NURSE AS A REMEDIAL AGENT IN CONNECTION WITH VENEREAL DISEASE.

Dr. Henry Moore, Surgeon to the Westmoreland Lock Hospital and the Royal City of Dublin Hospital, thanked the President for the honour she had done him in asking him to present a

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