

instruments for any surgical operation will be required. These include: scissors, probe, director, dissector, forceps (artery, dressing, sinus, dissecting, and laryngeal), retractors, aneurism needle, knives, needles, and needle-holder. In addition the nurse must have ready tracheotomy tubes, feathers, tapes, tracheal dilators, ligatures, and sutures. These must all be sterilized and made aseptic, as in hospital.

The necessaries for local and general anæsthesia must be at hand; also a roller pillow to be placed under the patient's neck, glycerine for lubricating the inner tube, antitoxic serum, and a serum syringe.

Before the operation the bed should be prepared, any false teeth removed, and the hair protected with a jaconet cap.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention: Miss A. L. Clarkson, Miss E. G. Smith, Miss McNaughton, Miss C. A. Bates, Miss E. Fenn, Miss C. Addison, Miss E. M. Streeter, Miss M. Punchard, Miss G. Phillips, Miss F. Sheppard, Miss G. A. Blundell, Miss M. D. Hunter, Miss E. A. O'Brien.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What is the most urgent emergency with which you have had to deal and how did you meet it?

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL.

The Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland recently invited Miss A. W. Goodrich, R.N., of the United States, President of the International Council of Nurses, to accept the Hon. Membership which it confers, at its discretion, on distinguished nurses.

We are asked by Miss Mollett, Hon. Secretary of the Council, to publish the following letter which she has received from Miss Goodrich:—

MY DEAR MADAM,—Your letter and the accompanying badge have just reached me, their delivery having been delayed by my absence from Albany.

May I beg to express to the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland my deep appreciation of the honour they have conferred upon me? I esteem very highly the privilege of honorary membership in your Council, and I accept the appointment with the greatest pleasure. Very sincerely yours,

ANNIE W. GOODRICH.

Miss Goodrich will take up her new appointment as Professor at Teachers' College early next year.

THE EVOLUTION OF POOR LAW NURSING.*

By MISS ELEANOR C. BARTON,

Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary, President of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association.

Before reading my paper I must explain that, though I am myself entirely Irish, my experience of Poor Law has been entirely in London, so I can speak of it from the English point of view.

In discussing the subject of the Evolution of Poor Law Nursing it is a little difficult to know where to begin. We know from good authority that the poor have been always with us, and we learn from an ancient document that "it was ordained by Kings before the Conquest that the Poor should be sustained by Parsons, rectors, and parishioners, so that no one should die for lack of sustenance." The first Poor Law Act of Parliament seems to have been introduced in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; it dealt with matters of relief for the destitute, homeless, helpless, and infirm, &c. In 1832 a Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in England and Wales. This was followed by a Poor Law Amendment Act, which provided for a Central Poor Law Authority, now known as the Local Government Board, and also directed that Boards of Guardians should be instituted in the different districts.

When considering the evolution of Poor Law Nursing it is interesting to note that in the orders issued by this Central Authority in 1847 the only qualification prescribed for the paid nurse in a workhouse was that she should be able "to read written directions upon medicines." In a subsequent circular, Guardians were recommended to discontinue as far as possible the practice of employing pauper inmates as assistant nurses, and were advised to provide a sufficient number of competent paid nurses. Later again, it was suggested that night nursing should be provided in the sick wards of the larger workhouses. A great advance was made when in 1867 Mr. Gathorne Hardy introduced the Metropolitan Poor Law Bill, which provided for the classification and separate treatment of the sick by the establishment of workhouse infirmaries in the Metropolis.

There is no sadder or more depressing reading than the history of so-called Poor Law Nursing in the days before there were separate infirmaries for the sick. No proper provision

* Read at the Nursing Conference, Dublin, June, 1913.

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