

While within the first year or two it might have appeared that the nurses' training was put to very little use, that notion had become a thing of the past. Not only were trained nurses required to carry on the work, but it would probably be found that nurses with extra training in any of the special branches of treatment would have the preference in future appointments.

In conclusion, Miss Garvie said that to many of the children had come, for the first time, the feeling that someone was interested in their welfare, and, in after years, when they became useful citizens, instead of a burden on the community, perhaps to many of them the school nurse would remain a grateful memory of their childhood.

The Session concluded with votes of thanks to the chairman and speakers proposed by Miss Lindsay, Matron of the Knightswood Fever Hospital, Glasgow.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH.

The Countess of Eglinton, who presided on Tuesday afternoon, said that she would not detain the meeting by remarks from the chair, but called upon the first speaker, Dr. Leslie Lyall, senior medical officer to the Royal Victoria Dispensary, Edinburgh, to present the first paper.

THE TUBERCULOSIS DISPENSARY: A SPHERE FOR NURSES.

Dr. Leslie Lyall said that tuberculosis had existed through the ages. In the middle ages it was known as the great white plague. It had only been regarded as a serious problem, and not a Divine visitation, during the past few generations. As a problem capable of solution it was a thing of yesterday.

That it has entered this last category was due to the scientific genius of Robert Koch, who by his discovery of the Tubercle Bacillus in 1882 had shown at once the causes of the disease, the reason of its spread, and the way of its prevention.

Subsidiary agencies by which the disease was enabled to flourish were poverty, badly ventilated sunless houses, overcrowding, want of cleanliness, insufficient food and clothing, drink, unhealthy trades or conditions of work, as well as debility following many other illnesses. All these were the sworn allies of the Tubercle Bacillus, and each played an important part in contributing to the toll which the Bacillus exacted from our population.

In 1887 another genius, only second to Koch, came into the field: Robert Philip, a native of Glasgow, and a distinguished graduate of Edinburgh University, saw that Koch's discovery was only a starting point, a foundation upon which to rear a scheme for the eradication of tuberculosis. He saw that with a known cause it was not beyond the power of human agencies to prevent and eventually to wipe out the disease. This scheme now universally associated with his

name was known as the Edinburgh anti-tuberculosis system. The tuberculosis dispensary served as (1) a receiving house and centre of diagnosis; (2) a clearing house and centre for observation; (3) a centre for curative treatment; (4) a centre for the examination of contacts; (5) a centre for after care; (6) an information bureau and educational centre. The speaker discussed these points in detail, and then said that as the dispensary was an essential unit of a well-equipped anti-tuberculosis scheme, so the nurse was essential for the proper working of the dispensary. It was not a light task, no trivial thing, to be privileged to take an active part in the greatest life-saving campaign the world had known. It was grandly humanising work, and no one could engage in it for long without feeling its grip upon them. No greater field of usefulness was open to the nursing profession.

DISTRICT NURSING.

Miss Peterkin, Superintendent, Scottish Branch, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, reviewed the history of the District Nursing movement since Mr. Rathbone over fifty years ago provided a nurse to work in the homes of the poor in Liverpool; and the consolidation of the movement when Queen Victoria founded it on national lines by devoting £72,000 of the women's offering to her in 1887 for the nursing of the poor in their own homes.

The speaker said she had been told that the idea was entirely Her Majesty's own, and came to her when visiting the cottagers on her estate at Balmoral. Now there were over 2,000 nurses—400 in Scotland alone—proving how well Queen Victoria grasped the needs of her people. It had spread beyond the United Kingdom, as the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada and the Bush Nursing Scheme in Australia were organized on the same lines. The nurse who took up district work needed a special course, in addition to her hospital training, to enable her to deal effectively with the conditions she met. Instead of a well-equipped hospital ward, in the working man's house she might find very little besides the patient, and she was there on sufferance. She must do her work with no other appliances than those which she carried. She should also be a health agent and a missionary, and adapt her teaching to all grades. The district nurse was trusted as few people were.

Concluding, Miss Peterkin said she knew well the enthusiasm, the loyalty and the courage of district nurses. She counselled them never to dream that their efforts were wasted; and never, never to lower their standard.

PRIVATE NURSING.

Miss Rough, Superintendent of the Co-operation of Private Nurses, Sardinia Terrace, Glasgow, spoke of private nursing as the most difficult branch of the profession. The private nurse required to be as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. She should have good health, sound

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)