

work, school work, health visiting, work in India, the Colonies, and work in the mission field nurses did not appear to be forthcoming in the numbers required. A nurse had scarcely completed her training before several posts were offered to her. How was it that with so much work for the trained nurse the training schools were suffering from a shortage of really suitable candidates for training?

The increased openings for women did not wholly account for the present state of things. We must also take into account the unsatisfactory position of the nurse viewed from the economic standpoint.

Miss Musson discussed first the economic position of nurses in training, and then that of trained and certificated nurses. First, in regard to the probationer in training. She performed much indispensable work for the institution during the third and fourth years of her engagement. Indeed, the work of a hospital would be at a standstill were her services suddenly to cease. Her hours were long, her work arduous, the discipline and self-denial alike strict. In return she expected board, pocket money, and a training which would ultimately enable her to earn her own living, and at the same time to exercise the skill she had acquired for the benefit of the sick.

There was almost invariably an agreement promising service on the part of the probationer, and training and teaching on the part of the hospital. The probationer rarely failed to perform her part of the contract; what about the hospital?

Ask any hospital governor you may meet how many pupils are in training at the nursing school of which he is a governor, how many hours per week and days per year they work, who lectures to, or holds classes for the pupils, how often and by whom they are examined, how many hours of hospital work the teachers have done in the day before they begin their lectures or classes. With very few exceptions the hospital governor will be quite unable to answer. The rights of the pupils had been largely forgotten, so much so that they also were in danger of forgetting them, and thought less of the teaching which is so important to them than of a few extra pounds per annum.

In many hospitals no provision whatever was made by the Governors for the education of their pupils. In some the Matron interested herself in obtaining lectures, and in a great many cases lectures were given voluntarily by members of the medical staff, but this voluntary and not always regular teaching did not excuse the negligence of hospital managers receiving pupils and failing to provide them with instruction. For an ignorant beginner to learn by experience was waste of time and energy, and inexcusable when the materials practised on were the sick and suffering.

Since the probationer entered hospital to be taught, her economic position was unsound if she failed to receive adequate instruction.

In regard to hours on duty no trained nurse would submit to a law which limited her hours of work. We claimed the right to remain the clock round with our patient if necessary, and at our own free will. But that was a different matter to keeping pupils on duty for over long hours.

In regard to one day's rest in seven, Miss Musson thought that the ideal to be aimed at was 52 rest days in the year, not including days on the sick list. A holiday of 30 days, and two days off duty in each of the remaining months would give the nurse the rest most people enjoyed.

Recently, Miss Musson said, she saw two distinguished members of the medical profession in the General Hospital, and was informed they were making a tour of inspection to see if the facilities for teaching medical students were such as to warrant a Government grant to the University. How she wished that these gentlemen had been nursing experts, sent by the Government to ascertain if the University and the hospitals of Birmingham were providing proper training for their nurses with a view to a grant towards their education. Summing up, she said that wherever the probationer failed to receive decent lodging, proper food, or sufficient instruction, she was not receiving adequate return for her services, and her economic position was therefore unsatisfactory.

In regard to trained nurses, better pay was essential. The most satisfactory branch in this respect was co-operative private nursing, but the work was trying and uncertain, and what was most wrong was that it was open to competition with the half trained and untrained. District and school nurses had no really good salaries. In regard to those working in hospital, and undertaking the important work of teaching, the outlook was poor. The pupils began with about nine-thirteenths of the teacher's pay, and there was little increase to look forward to. With regard to the salaries of Sisters, a salary of £36 per annum could not be considered extravagant for the responsibilities entailed, and often less was offered. The first charge upon it should be provision for old age, Sisters were rarely able to put money away, but they were able to help others with less strain on an adequate salary.

In regard to organisation, Miss Musson said nurses were very busy people, but they must organise. Take THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, without it the nurses of the country would have no voice of their own. Nurses were in many instances having better pay and shorter hours, but all was not well as long as any were overworked and underpaid.

THE NEED OF CO-OPERATION FOR SUPERINTENDENTS OF NURSING HOMES.

The next paper was presented by Mrs. Arthur Stabb on the need for Co-operation of Superintendents of Nursing Homes. Mrs. Stabb said

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