

us—as nurse, investigator, teacher, and welfare worker—healing, comforting, preventing, so as to bring about that general weal, towards which we are ever striving.

Very close attention has been given to country district nursing during the year. The Order's plan is known to many of you, but will bear repeating. The scheme is to organize local associations in large country areas, instead of in a city or town, for the purpose of supplying nurses to everyone in those districts. The headquarters should be as central as possible, from which the nurses go out to patients near at hand, or any number of miles distant within the limits. They will combine continuous with district nursing—staying a day, several days a week, or several weeks, with a patient, as the necessities of the case demand, and the general health of the community will permit. To cope with the work satisfactorily, a nursing home is a necessity in practically every country district, for it has been found by careful investigation and study of various country districts that it is necessary to provide a clean, quiet place where a sick patient may be taken, and may receive skilled care at any time, day or night. The smallest home would have accommodation for at least two nurses and three or four patients. These Homes will be community centres, from which welfare work in its various forms will be done. The rural school nursing is done in connection with these country district nursing branches. Other organized societies in the country districts have been studying out this nursing problem, and their co-operation has been most helpful in enabling us to reach the people.

For in extending our work into the country districts, it has been found that all are agreed that a nurse is a boon, is badly needed, when a person is critically ill in bed, but that is the only time. Now, as you know, the most lasting good done by the nurse is done through her investigating and her teaching. By her pre-natal visits she may save the life of mother and babe, by her school inspection she may prevent the locality's being desolated by an epidemic, saving the lives of many children, or she may be the means of snatching children from a life of ignorance, merely by having defects corrected early in their careers. By her child welfare visits many babies will be saved to a happy babyhood, which is their right, and so on.

When the Order fixed the standards for its nurses in that splendid Royal Charter, setting forth that the nurses of the Order must be "thoroughly trained in hospital and district

nursing," they were far in advance of the times, and consequently had to arrange themselves to give the training in district nursing, so as to fit the nurses for their special line of duty. This course at first was very simple, as it consisted of the practical instruction and experience in actual district nursing, with its various problems, and a lecture course. The larger centres, where the best experience could be obtained, were chosen, and the local associations at those centres undertook to have the course given, as outlined by the Executive Council. Time went on, and the evolution of the district nurse brought about a much more complicated problem in the matter of her education, and the local committees, chosen to manage the affairs of their respective districts and have the people well cared for, found themselves with the added responsibility of arranging for the training of nurses thrust upon them, and what happened is the only logical thing that could have happened—what is happening in all of the hospital training schools to-day, to the detriment of the nursing profession—the education of the nurse, being secondary, was neglected. Blame cannot be placed on anyone in particular. The system just worked itself out logically, and was found wanting.

This work, the training of the nurses in district nursing, is the work of the Board of Governors, who are the training, distributing, and supervising body for the whole Victorian Order system.

My recommendation is that the Executive Council take into consideration the question of establishing training centres directly under this Board, and financed by them. These training centres would be established for the sole purpose of educating the nurse. Arrangements might be made with the local associations whereby the post-graduate students would receive their practical experience on the district. This recommendation I respectfully submit to you, for your careful consideration.

Early in the year the Executive Council decided to have printed for distribution, from time to time, educative leaflets on health. The first of these has already been printed, and many copies distributed. These leaflets will undoubtedly do a great deal of good, often in most unexpected quarters.

The nurses we cannot adequately thank. To them really belong the laurels, for just in so far as they have been faithful, efficient, and loyal, has the work of the Order been possible."

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