

teachers. The whole question of training of nurses should be faced in a long-sighted and generous spirit.

Miss AMY HUGHES did not agree with the proposal to create various classes of nurses. Village nurses worked as midwifery and maternity nurses. Educated women were wanted to work amongst the poor rather than the creation of too many nurses of the same rank as those they worked amongst. Her experience had been that it was most difficult for nurses when working amongst their own class to raise their standards. Well-educated, refined, and broadminded women should be attracted into a special service.

Miss WOLSELEY LEWIS (Superintendent of the Staffordshire Trained Nurses' Association, Stoke-on-Trent) supported the point of view put forward by Miss Joseph. She did not agree with Miss Hughes. While the more educated women might be useful, they did not understand the cottage patients in the same way as those who had lived amongst them in their younger days. Also in private houses, middle-class patients often preferred to have nurses of lower social rank, who did not expect quite so much as nurses of a higher social status.

Miss WYLES (Sister, Great Northern Hospital) considered that Ward Sisters should always be educated gentlewomen.

Miss COX-DAVIES (Royal Free Hospital, London) deprecated training different classes of nurses for different classes of work. Any woman who had to do with the care of the sick, and was concerned with the issues of life and death, should have as a foundation of her work the recognized course of hospital training.

Miss BAILLIE (Royal Infirmary, Bristol) said it was necessary to attract the right kind of candidate. It was not altogether a question of pay and hard work, but mothers, and heads of schools, hesitated to suggest to girls to enter the nursing profession when the hours on duty were so much shorter in many others. Her committee had now decided to give the nurses a day off once a week.

Miss SPARSHOTT (Royal Infirmary, Manchester) was of opinion that the better educated women made the best nurses in the end.

Miss CLARK (West Ham Infirmary) said it must be remembered that nursing was a profession, and the girl of to-day, in making her choice of one, took into consideration the provision for her old age.

A member of the Conference, speaking from the nurse's point of view, asked whether it would not be possible for a nurse to receive some of her training before she was twenty-four.

Miss LLOYD STILL (St. Thomas') and Miss HOGG (Guy's) said that probationers could now begin their training at 21. Miss LLOYD STILL thought it desirable that a girl should see something of the pleasures and joys of the world before settling down to hospital life.

Miss BODLEY (Selly Oak Infirmary) considered that nurses should have experience outside their own training school before promotion to Ward Sisters' posts.

Miss JOSEPH explained that her idea was there should be a minimum standard for every nurse, with pass and honour degrees, but some might prefer to specialize.

The CHAIRMAN said that the fixing of the probationer's age at 24 was a relic of mid-Victorian times, when the girl of 24 was often a shy, diffident, reticent, retiring child. Now, at 21, she was a confident, self-assertive woman. His own eldest girl was just over 20, and a young 20, when she began to train, and for the last nine months he had had the happiness of her help in his theatre, and he was confident that she had never done anything else half so well in her life. He agreed with everything that had been said, and expressed his appreciation of the help he had received from nurses.

SIR ARTHUR STANLEY, in proposing a vote of thanks to Sir Berkeley Moynihan, said it took an Irishman to agree with everything that had been said that evening.

[END OF FIRST SESSION.]

## AN IRISH TRIBUTE TO IRISH NURSES.

A public meeting was held in the Lecture Theatre of the Royal Dublin Society, Dublin, on Thursday, June 13th, the object of which was to raise a fund for the benefit of all Irish Certificated Nurses as a mark of the nation's gratitude for their services in the war. It is proposed to endow a Hostel for those who need it.

The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Sir James Campbell, Bart.) presided, and the principal speaker was the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, G.B.E., M.P., Chairman of the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John.

The Lord Chancellor said they were met for the purpose of considering and determining how best they could recognise the loyal response that had been made by the women of Ireland, more especially in the department of nursing, in connection with the war. That was not the only department in which they had been active. We knew what they had done in regard to supply depôts, which supplied everything required for the surgical and medical comforts of our wounded soldiers, but the immediate concern was with the efforts made by Irishwomen as trained nurses in the field and hospital. Since the war broke out they had been in direct touch with unspeakable horrors, and all who realised how these nurses had nobly answered the call must feel that the duty they were now called upon to discharge was a labour of love.

It was suggested in England that a Nursing College and Benevolent Fund should be provided and maintained, but in Ireland, having regard to the fact that these nurses carried on their profession as a means of livelihood and were never overpaid, and that after the war many of them would retire from nervous

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)