

It cannot be denied we are on the threshold of attaining universal recognition of the old proverb, "prevention is better than cure," but only through enlightenment can we carry into homes the fundamental truth of that tiresome old platitude of our copy-book days.

To change the attitude of the type of mind that regards precaution as pandering to that totally despised quality "fear," and to turn that attitude to one of simple knowledge, based on wisdom, sounds no great mental feat—only those who attempt the task know what an uphill process it is—or to train oneself to listen with indefatigable patience, sympathy and tact to the multitudinous forms in which ignorance is embedded in superstition. Then, again, to deal with poverty coupled with its endless train of ill-health and despondency, and to realise there may be but one opportunity—the first, of using the right phrase to present the inquirer's needs, and so set in motion a right train of thought and knowledge, for the mothers of the rising generation. I am convinced these are a few of the difficulties with which we are up against in Public Health work. It is just this psychological factor in preventative work which constantly opens up new vistas of possibility in speeding on results. We are still so very much in the experimental stages of the work, surely the greatest good can only be obtained by our having opportunities of meeting and discussing our mutual experience, successful or otherwise, and giving the results for the benefit of each other.

Your Royal Highness has more than once impressed on us the urgent necessity of our managing the affairs of our own profession: to-day, I hope you see the outcome of your good counsels.

As you see by the leaflets distributed, our idea is to hold conferences for which we have been fortunate in getting specialists to consent to speak or read papers which we hope later to publish in pamphlet form, and thus circularise our ideas and problems.

With the approach of a Health Ministry it is vital to us to be organised, and to be prepared to express our opinions on the complex propositions relating to the place and future work of the trained nurse in the Public Health Services.

We must be prepared for competition in this vastly interesting field of work from women, who consider other portals than those of the Nurse-Training Schools will suffice to equip them for this work of national importance. Without organisation we shall have no opportunity of bringing any influence to bear on the vexed questions which seem likely to arise.

In my opinion, our minimum of three years' general training in hospitals or infirmaries is the essential technical foundation, on which to build up our work, in addition to which experience in midwifery is necessary. A knowledge of sociology, the laws relating to public health, tuberculosis work and the post-graduate courses already established for Queen's Nurses, are invaluable.

We have one great asset in our favour in claiming our right to serve the State. Thanks to the devoted work of nurses before and since the foundation of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute in 1887, which has helped to gain for us trained nurses the confidence of the mothers, we now have their trust to a degree which might be the envy of statesmen and politicians.

This asset, coupled with the fact that our work is associated with, and under, the guidance of those most trusted of all people, the wise physician. And yet we must take to heart these famous words of warning:—

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Our only fortune can be the fruits of successful work, the best of all. The trained nurse's opportunity is NOW—all too soon it may be too late.

The standard of nursing in public health work is all important. It is necessary that Parliament should without delay enforce a safe standard by Act of Parliament. I therefore propose with pleasure the following Resolution:—

A STANDARD OF NURSING IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PUBLIC.

"That this Conference wishes to place on record its opinion that in the interests of the public and trained nurses alike it is expedient that a Bill should be introduced into the House of Commons at the earliest possible moment to provide for the registration by the State of fully qualified nurses, and that such a Bill should insure that the legislative authority over the nurses shall be free from bias towards any one organisation or another and, further, that the Bill should provide for a One Portal System of three years' hospital training to qualify nurses for admission to the Register."

Miss Holmes, in seconding the Resolution, said: I have great pleasure in seconding this Resolution. I have done a good deal of administrative work among women, and I feel that none but the fully qualified should be given positions of responsibility in connection with Public Health Work. I endorse all that Miss Le Geyt has said as regards the need for a just system of State Registration.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

Miss Alderman then put the following resolution to the meeting:—

AN ADVISORY COUNCIL OF TRAINED NURSES.

That this Conference considers that if a State Nursing Service is established under the Ministry of Health there should be appointed an Advisory Council of Trained Nurses to advise on all questions relating to nursing.

As a Society, said Miss Alderman, we are going to make the study and propaganda of all matters relating to preventive work our chief object. For some years a number of doctors and trained Nurses have been quietly doing Public Health Work. Some have been working for voluntary societies and some for municipal authorities. The Medical and Nursing Professions should form the

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