

while doing such work as tucking in sheets when making beds. There should be a good library. It was unlikely that Nurses would favour most the purely technical books and in order to meet the tastes of the majority, the most generally interesting books should be those chosen.

NURSES BUT CHILDREN.

It was to be remembered that Nurses were but children of an older class and so those books which were most interesting should be provided.

Sir Henry Miers vacated the Chair at the close of Miss Milne's speech and Sir E. Cooper Perry took his place.

DISCUSSION.

Miss Musson (Birmingham) said it was evident that the College must be very busy. She was suffering from a surfeit of ideas. There should be greater combination between the training schools. Exchange of probationers would be simpler when a uniform curriculum was established. She was in favour of specially trained teachers of nursing, but the real training was got in the wards. She was at issue with Miss Milne when the latter suggested memorising theory while tucking up a bed. It was highly important that local centres should not regard themselves as units but as part of a great whole.

Miss Cox-Davies (London) said that most of what she had intended to say had been put forward by other speakers, but she would go over the points, specially she wished to emphasise the necessity for unity of local centres with the headquarters, and the latter should be supported in every way, even at the expense of a local centre. Only by building up the College itself would it do all it wanted to do. (At present there is no Collegiate body.—Ed.)

Sir Cooper Perry, in thanking the speakers, said that he doubted whether it would be possible to arrive at a scheme whereby affiliation between the hospitals could be accomplished it would be work of very great value. He then invited Miss Gill to read her paper

THE IDEALS AND ETHICS OF NURSING.

Miss Gill (Edinburgh) said it was very refreshing to find such a subject brought up by the Conference when people seemed so pre-occupied with labour conditions of life. Although the subject of ethics ranked high, it was not an easy one to speak on, and she put forward a plea that there should be more general and definite teaching on this branch of philosophy. The ideal woman had little to learn from ethics, but she was seldom met with and we had to train ourselves and others. (Ethics have long been taught in the best training schools in the States.—Ed.)

It was generally allowed that character was of the first importance. Character and habits count for so much and nurses should be taught by precept and example. Probationers when they enter the hospital were often only twenty or twenty-one years of age; they were most impressionable and they had not had time to think out problems of life and character. If nursing was to be a

profession and not a trade, it must be known by its standards. There was an unfortunate tendency to seek pleasures outside work and to regard work as a necessary evil, a tendency to fall away from standards. Nurses were more apt to fail in the ethical than the technical side of their work, and so we want to fight declining standards. There were very few books on the ethics of nursing, but Florence Nightingale's book should be in the hands of every nurse, and Charlotte Aiken's was the best book for the teachers of nursing. Miss Gill concluded with an appreciation of the way in which many sisters of hospitals in the past had upheld the great traditions of the profession.

Miss Lloyd Still (London) said that her mind was filled with forebodings and she felt constrained to implore nurses to guard against the dangers of falling away from the highest aims. The public did not understand nurses; no profession was so incomprehensible as nursing. The persistent attempt to consider and reform grievances might delay progress indefinitely. Suggestions of trade-unionism had been made. It was impossible to think that nurses would agree to this, they would no longer be nurses, no longer be fit for the responsibility of human life. The public thought that the hours should be shortened but this would bring the profession down to a dead level, to a soul-killing occupation. Was the nurse to be deprived of her birthright, to be debarred from experience because she was bound by hours, or should we make the period of training longer? If salaries were to be increased too then the generosity of the public must be increased if everything were to be done that should be done for the patients.

The Dean of Manchester took the chair, on the instructions of Sir Cooper Perry, who then left the meeting, and delivered his address expressing great appreciation of the work of the nurses both in the hospitals and in the homes which they entered. He emphasised the necessity for a knowledge of psychology on the part of the nurses and brought forward instances of the way in which the personality and intuition, which a good nurse has, will react upon the patient. On concluding his speech without calling for discussion, he asked the nurses not to leave at once as some very interesting things were going to happen. A vase of carnations was then brought in and Miss Musson presented this to Miss Sparshott, and spoke with appreciation of all the trouble which she had taken to organise the Conference. Miss Sparshott, in reply expressed her appreciation of the flowers offered to her and regretted that Sir Cooper Perry had gone away with the taxi, as she doubted whether she could carry them to the infirmary.

Miss Isabel Macdonald asked for discussion on the papers read on the ethics of nursing, but this request was met with a point blank refusal from the Dean, and everyone hurriedly left the platform.

If this is what the College calls a conference, it should be notified beforehand that "the reciprocity will be all on one side."

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