

In her opening remarks the speaker said, we are accustomed to the idea of the hospital for the poor, the infirmary for the destitute, but there is no such provision made for the middle classes—the new poor. It is time that the hospitals were re-organised. By taking payments from patients according to their means, a steady source of income could be secured, and the needed special treatment or advice would be available for those who cannot afford a specialist's fee or a nursing home.

In Germany a far larger number of small school children wear glasses than in England. The reason for this, said Mrs. Paul, is not that German children suffer from eye strain more than English children; indeed the minimum age for admission to the schools in Germany is seven, as against five years in England; but the medical examination and treatment of young school children is much more searching there than in England. We recognise the clinic as the proper place for the treatment of minor ailments; the out-patient department as the place where the advice of the specialist can be sought. How can both these be made available for the new poor as well as for the artisan or the mechanic? The speaker suggested that the grading of hospitals would largely solve this problem, and that it ought to be possible for paying and free patients to be seen on the same afternoon.

Day nurseries, or, as she preferred to call them, nursery schools, are a necessity for the middle classes. The income of the ordinary professional man is such that he cannot contemplate marriage and the rearing of children till he is about forty, and unless marriage is so delayed that the parents cannot expect to bring healthy, robust children into the world, the wife must take her share in contributing to the exchequer—a girl should be provided with a career rather than with a dowry. The nursery school should receive the children from two to seven or, preferably, eight years of age. The mother should have the care of the child for the first year of its life; no other can take the place of the mother during that period. Even an indifferent mother is far better than the most perfectly-equipped day nursery. The child should grow easily and happily, learning to be self-reliant and self-helpful, without any of the atmosphere of nervous strain that seems unavoidable in the school proper.

Nursery schools should prove a bridge in the training of infant welfare workers between the leaving school age and the time for entering hospital for general training. The speaker urged that the knowledge of the healthy normal child is one of the essentials in the preparation for Infant Welfare work.

In the discussion that followed, Miss Le Geyt said she found that the girl straight from school is not sufficiently educated, and that attendance at evening continuation classes leaves the student too jaded and tired to attend to any work at the clinic in the day.

In contrasting the training of the medical student with that of the nurse, Miss Macdonald

pointed out that in the five years of his course the medical student receives training in all branches of his profession, while the nurse, at the end of her three or four years' course, has to provide herself with further training in midwifery, &c. The Chairman raised the point as to how the general practitioner or the specialist would regard the idea of clinics for others than the poor. Replying, Mrs. Paul said we must look forward to the time when girls and boys will remain at school till eighteen years old. The training of a nurse should thoroughly equip her in all branches of her profession, and the four years' course should include midwifery and public health work. With regard to the doctor's attitude towards clinics she advocated the payment of all professional workers, including the medical profession, for their services.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"STEADFAST AND TRUE."

To the Secretary R.B.N.A.

DEAR MADAM,—It is a great pleasure to see our beautiful banner and all it signifies. To me that alone is worth fighting for, and I hope all the young members will realise its significance and carry on our standard with the motto untarnished: "Steadfast and True."

I am, sincerely yours,
ALICE CATTELL.

HELENA BENEVOLENT FUND.

The Hon. Treasurer acknowledges with thanks the following donations:—

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NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

Owing to the increasing work at the office of the R.B.N.A., and to the necessity in future for her attendance at meetings of the General Nursing Council, the Secretary regrets that, except by special appointment, she can only give interviews to members who call between the hours of 10 and 12 noon. Members who cannot call between these hours and who wish to see her regarding any business, should write to the office stating when they are free and she will always have pleasure in arranging for appointments with them.

ISABEL MACDONALD,
Secretary to the Corporation.

10, Orchard Street, W.

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