

DISCUSSION.

MISS E. M. MUSSON, R.R.C., Matron of the General Hospital, Birmingham, said that much of the criticism with which she had come prepared has already been met by some of the points in Miss Lloyd Still's paper. She had, for instance, elucidated that it was not intended that pupils should be taught to make rectal and vaginal examinations, but that their duties should be limited to preparation for such examinations.

Speaking generally, she thought the Draft Syllabus rather overcrowded; she also asked how soon the smaller training schools would have to adopt the Syllabus.

She suggested that some of the teaching should be optional, some was somewhat superficial, and some meant only a smattering. She thought instruction on the following points might be omitted:—Atmospheric Pressure, Drainage Systems, Ante-natal care, Child Welfare, Sequelae of Communicable Diseases. Then Cellulitis and Boils were not mentioned, or Surgical Shock, or Diseases of Special Systems.

In conclusion, she welcomed very much the hope of a uniform system of training.

MISS KATHERINE G. LLOYD, R.R.C., Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Lancaster, said she had consulted her medical staff. They thought the practical elementary teaching overloaded.

MISS B. CHAFF, R.R.C., Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Truro, asked how much time should be taken up in lectures? Some of the difficulties which she had noted had been dealt with by Miss Lloyd-Still.

MISS BARBER, Matron of the General Hospital, Yarmouth, voiced some of the difficulties of the smaller training schools, and said that the material out of which nurses had to be made had to be considered.

Their probationers were drawn from girls of the artizan class, with an elementary education, who had to begin to earn their living at 14. The hospitals therefore got at 18 and upwards the failures in other occupations. She thought if the scheme before them were adopted it was not fair to take probationers who could never pass the final examination, and suggested that an entrance examination should be established, otherwise they would be simply exploiting probationers for the benefit of the hospital. There might also be interim examinations, and those who failed in them might be required to serve for a fourth year.

Then, there was no guarantee that Sisters were qualified to give the requisite instruction to probationers, a totally different thing from administering a ward. Again, there was the question of finance, such instructors as dietitians, Sister-Tutors, etc., would be required. Possibly travelling tutors might be arranged.

The shortage of staff in hospitals had also to be taken into consideration. It was not certain that nurses would be able to attend examinations, or lectures.

MISS E. M. CUMMINS, R.R.C., Lady Superintendent, Royal Infirmary, Liverpool, referred to Miss Musson's competence and the usefulness of her criticism. She pointed out that criticism of the Syllabus did not mean disagreement with higher education. She wished, however, that the Syllabus could be drawn up in simple language. Its result, in its present form, had been to arouse consternation in the training schools. Speaking as a Matron she thought the first year was overweighted, and beyond the capacity of the average probationer. At least four years' work was represented. She hoped the General Nursing Council would not lose sight of the fact that moral qualities, and not theoretical knowledge only were required.

MISS ANNIE MCINTOSH, C.B.E., R.R.C., Matron and Superintendent of Nursing at St. Bartholomew's Hospital endorsed everything that had been said on every point. The lecturers and teachers at St. Bartholomew's were of opinion the Syllabus was overweighted. Some of the teaching could be given in a Preliminary Training School, but it must be remembered that probationers were shy, and it took them three months to find their feet. They got confused ideas if you tried to cram them. Elementary science might be deferred to the second and third years.

Three short years were not a long enough time to get in all the necessary training for a nurse. A good general training was all that could be attempted in that time, the rest could be added afterwards.

MISS E. C. BARTON, R.R.C., Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary, and President of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association, expressed on behalf of many poor law matrons their deep gratitude for, and appreciation of, the most stimulating Syllabus. Perhaps the Syllabus looked alarming, but the thought at the back of the minds of those who formulated it was to make training and teaching easier for teacher and taught. A new era had opened, and nurses would be taught how to think. The teaching of both theory and practice were represented in the Chart.

The Conference opened up very much of interest and more such meetings would probably be necessary to arrive at what was best for patients, nurses, and those responsible for the teaching of the nurses.

MISS BODLEY, R.R.C., Matron of the Selly Oak Infirmary, voicing the views of the Birmingham Committee of Boards of Guardians, said (1) they were not very much afraid of the Syllabus. (2) The Committee were of opinion that special teachers would be required, also that theoretical instruction should take place in the nurses' time outside the 48 hours of practical work in the wards. (3) That a Preliminary Course of instruction was advisable with an examination at the end.

They recommended that these suggestions should be included in the Syllabus.

She was also asked to refer to the position of nurses now in training, but the Committee were

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