

the nurse as a national asset, keeping in view the importance of the scheme for her education so that she might take her place in the life of the Nation.

She would like to place on record what the General Nursing Council owed to its Chairman for his unselfish work in preparing the business, and in assisting in their deliberations. If the Council had not succeeded in pleasing everyone with the Syllabus, the criticisms which had been offered would help them enormously when deciding on its final form. She was sure everyone present would agree that they could have had no more suitable Chairman to guide their deliberations.

Miss Dowbiggin, in her admirable paper, had emphasised the importance of nursing as a national asset. Whether they were nursed in Voluntary Hospitals, Poor-Law Infirmarys, or elsewhere, sick people were equally sick, all needed the same care. We were too much disposed to remain in water-tight compartments.

In Dr. Goodall's paper they had had the advantage of the views of a member of the medical profession whose work with Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and other leaders of the Nursing Profession had mainly gained State Registration.

The Conference had been convened to get together the heads of the Nursing Profession. It was useless to get half-a-dozen people together to draft the Syllabus without learning what the heads of the training schools wanted.

She had been much struck by the exceedingly kindly and helpful tone of the criticism given. It was good that they could meet with such interest, and with the desire to meet the wishes of the General Nursing Council with regard to the future education of nurses.

In regard to the criticisms expressed they were told that the first year's Syllabus was overloaded. But it was explained that the first year's work was to be taught in briefest outline. If the Syllabus were put into Kindergarten language they would find most of it was taught at present. Otherwise the nurse in her second and third year would be ignorant of what she should know.

Then there was the difficulty as to how teaching would be limited. An Examination Syllabus would be issued, but obviously it would not have been wise to draw this up at the present stage.

Someone had asked whether material could not be considered rather than the number of beds. The General Nursing Council would take into consideration the number of occupied beds, and the teaching facilities for nurses.

The fourth point was the question of post-graduate courses. She was much averse to separating instruction into water-tight compartments. Nurses must have a comprehensive course.

Miss Cox-Davies did not consider that the good theoretical nurse was necessarily good in practice. She would like the lady who thought so to be nursed in an illness—not a very serious one—by a theoretical nurse; possibly her opinion would undergo modification.

Four points emerged for consideration:—

1. That under the Nurses' Registration Acts the object of the General Nursing Councils was (a) to raise the standard of the Nursing Profession, (b) to standardise Nursing Education.

2. One of the great criticisms of the present system of nursing education was that when a nurse had completed her general training, if she desired to take up Public Health Work or District Nursing it was necessary for her to undergo a further course of special training before she was competent to do so. It was sought by the present Syllabus to disarm that criticism.

3. The Syllabus must be capable of expansion so that it could be developed as a better class were attracted into the Nursing Profession.

4. This was the Syllabus produced by the State Nursing Council of England and Wales. It must be worthy of what it stood for, so as to justify itself when it came before other countries.

MISS LLOYD STILL offered some further elucidations. In regard to the criticism of overcrowding, she emphasised that the first year's teaching was to be regarded merely as an introduction to subsequent years, and treated in the briefest outline. Viewed in that light it was not too full. It might be regarded as ploughing the ground for the less educated girl so that she could take advantage of the second and third years' teaching. The Syllabus was for teachers; it was not intended that it should be placed in the hands of probationers.

It was desirable that probationers should early in their career be taught the meaning of Public Health and Infant Welfare Work so that when they came to consider what branch of work they would take up they might be in a position to judge.

Elementary Science and Hygiene were the foundation of a nurse's work. Miss Lloyd Still emphasised Miss Florence Nightingale's well-known views on this point. She saw, in her day, that a nurse's work should be based on this teaching, and that it was essential she should be taught the importance of pure air, pure water, efficient drainage, cleanliness, and light, in regard to the health of the community, if her nursing knowledge was to be sound and adequate.

In Conclusion.

The CHAIRMAN expressed appreciation of the views expressed. They would help in the production of such a Syllabus as would conduce to the attainment of the objects they had in view.

They had been considering Food Values, now they would go and test them, and re-assemble at 2.30 p.m.

We have devoted all the space at our disposal this week to reporting the proceedings at the Morning Session, as we wished to give a full account of so important an event, and we know it is looked forward to with eagerness by many who were not present at the Conference.

We hope to report the Afternoon Session in our next issue.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)