

CONFERENCE OF SISTER TUTORS.

OFFICIAL REPORT.

There was a large attendance at the Adam Hall, Federation of Medical and Allied Services, Stratford Place, on Saturday, February 24th, for the Sister-Tutors' Conference, sixty-five being present.

Proceedings opened with a few words of welcome from the Chairman, Miss Gullan, St. Thomas's Hospital. After reports had been read by the Secretary, Miss Lane, St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and the Treasurer, Miss Windley, Paddington Hospital, Harrow Road, the Chairman called on Miss Lodge, General Hospital, Birmingham, to read a Paper on "Ways in which Educated Women may be attracted towards the Nursing Profession."

Miss Lodge said that she felt sure that if educated women really knew what the nursing profession is they would want to enter it. Few know of the improved conditions which now existed. She suggested that much might be done to awaken interest by visits from trained nurses to the upper forms of girls' schools to tell them about the profession. Secondly, that it might be helpful if the trained nurse, so often attached to the staff of the larger schools, lectured to the sixth form on Hygiene, First Aid, and Elementary Physiology and Anatomy, with a view to interesting the pupils in humanity. Periodical lectures on the History of Nursing illustrated by lantern slides, might be given by a trained nurse to the upper forms in order to keep the profession before the eyes of those who have still to choose their walk in life. Or would it not fulfil a need if there were trained nurse lecturers attached to the staff of Universities in order that elementary courses might be taken by those intending later to enter the nursing profession. This would help materially the social standing of the profession. Lastly, the vocational side can never be overlooked. Nursing is the highest form of social service which can be undertaken, and this aspect should appeal to many.

An interesting discussion followed. Miss Armstrong, Royal Northern group of Hospitals, advocated the abolition of uniform. The general public could not distinguish the trained sick nurse from the little nursemaid whose behaviour was often such as would prejudice the better classes from allowing their daughters to enter the profession. Miss Armstrong also emphasised the great need of keeping in view the vocational side, and felt the Sister-Tutor could help in this.

Other suggestions were propaganda, using local papers, girl guide and school magazines, to interest the school girl.

Miss King, Manchester Children's Hospital, Pendlebury, then read a Paper on "Post-Graduate Courses for Sister-Tutors." She felt this should be a practical course, *e.g.*, seven to fourteen days in a large teaching hospital might be arranged with

the hospital authorities, and visits to the theatres and wards to see new treatment might be more helpful than lectures, of which Sister-Tutors had opportunity of hearing many. Or lectures on special subjects might be arranged for during the course.

Discussion followed, and the general opinion was that if the larger hospitals would be willing to arrange such practical courses they would be much appreciated. Another suggestion that found favour was that a short period, such as a week-end occasionally, spent in going round the wards with the Night Sister would be very helpful. Something of this kind would be invaluable on account of the great mental refreshment obtained, by being again in the atmosphere of the wards, apart from the knowledge gained by the fresh insight into practical work.

Miss Fountain, Sister-Tutor, Lambeth Infirmary, and lecturer to Nurses at Brompton Hospital, Chelsea Hospital for Women, Victoria Children's Hospital, Tite Street, and the Cancer Hospital, Fulham Road, read a paper giving her experience as a Sister-Tutor in a group of unaffiliated hospitals. She showed how the small and special hospitals, even when arrangements were made for giving the prescribed practical training, had a very real difficulty in coping with the theoretical part. A Visiting Sister-Tutor seems to be one solution of the problem, but it is obviously impossible for such an one to do all the teaching in several hospitals, especially when the kind of practical experience gained in each differs widely, making a different course of lectures necessary for each hospital. Therefore it follows that there must be someone inside with whom definite co-operation can be arranged. This arrangement will vary according to the amount and kind of assistance that can be given from within.

It seems best to allow those who will help to choose the parts of the Syllabus with which they feel most inclined to deal, and the visiting teacher can then take the remainder.

In large towns very satisfactory arrangements can sometimes be made with technical schools for the teaching of some subjects.

Miss Fountain then outlined her own scheme of work. This was followed by brief outlines from other Tutors working in groups of hospitals. Some brief statements dealing with other topics sent up for discussion followed.

In conclusion, the Chairman reminded the members of the Sister-Tutor Section that four members of the Committee, Miss Abram, Royal Infirmary, Manchester, Miss Bishop, King's College, Hospital, Miss Coode and Miss Gullan, St. Thomas's Hospital, and the three officers, would be due to retire in June.

Nominations to fill the vacancies were asked for by March 31st. These to be sent to the Secretary, and consent of candidate first obtained.

The retiring members would be eligible for re-election, and the Chairman hoped that the provinces would be well represented.

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