

of Kipling, and she had given her audience to-day a feast upon the ethics of living, which no one knows as does Kipling; Miss Parsons is also the very good friend of the R.B.N.A., which never seeks her aid for any of its numerous benevolent funds in vain.

The vote of thanks was seconded by Miss Cattell, and heartily responded to by an enthusiastic audience.

SISTER TUTORS.

BY ONE OF THEM.

Many complaints are heard to-day of overcrowding in the higher branches of the Nursing Profession, but there is at least one branch in which the supply of candidates is not equal to the demand. Great difficulty is experienced in obtaining a sufficient number of well qualified and experienced nurses to fill the posts of Sister Tutors, in hospitals and infirmaries, where it is necessary to prepare pupils for the State Examination.

A much higher educational standard is being required of nurses to-day, as in the near future it is probable that all nurses will have to be registered by the State if they are to inspire the public with confidence as attendants on the sick.

The Sister Tutor is required to give lectures to the first, second and third year nurses on Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene, the properties and action of drugs, practical nursing, bandaging and splints, in fact, on all the subjects set out in the Syllabus of Examination (and shortly, it is to be hoped, in the Prescribed Syllabus of Training required under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919), and the Nurses' Chart, authorised by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales. She has also to set questions on her lectures, to mark the note books, and to give individual coaching where necessary. She should also attend all lectures given by the Hon. Staff, and give coaching classes for revision of all lectures.

There is ample scope in such a programme for the work of a whole time officer, and that of the Sister Tutor should, as a rule, be concerned solely with the teaching of nurses and probationers, and with their preparation for their examinations. Unfortunately, in smaller hospitals, she is often obliged to combine other duties with her teaching work, such as relieving the Assistant Matron, or assisting the Matron with clerical work, and giving out medical stores, linen, &c. This, however, is not a satisfactory arrangement, and militates against her doing her real work efficiently.

Very special gifts are required of a Sister Tutor. Technically she should, of course, possess a certificate of general training, as only the trained nurse can fully appreciate and sympathise with the difficulties of the young probationer and nurse in training, and it follows that, as she has to prepare her pupils for the State Examination in Nursing, she herself should be a State Registered Nurse. Other valuable qualifications are the Teaching Diploma given by King's College, the certificate of the Central Midwives' Board, and one for Massage.

But technical qualifications only are a very insufficient equipment—a love of teaching, not only the possession of knowledge, but the power to impart it, to make lectures lucid, attractive, inspiring, to show that theoretical knowledge is not a dull necessity in the nursing curriculum, but an illumination of practical work, making clear what was confused, and thus forming the groundwork of good and efficient work, and adding to its joy. To cultivate the fallow mind, to develop further that which is partially trained, and to instil high ideals, are a joy to the real teacher, and most valuable work for the community.

In addition, the Sister-Tutor should have wide practical experience, the more varied the better, and should inspire her pupils to take an interest in the questions of the day,

in literature and art, so that their mental development may be evenly balanced.

Also, she needs insight into character, and vision to estimate what may be done not only with the more brilliant pupils, but also with the many dull and slow members of her classes, those who may do good practical work, but who find study and examinations terribly difficult.

It is one of the first fruits of the Nurses' Registration Act that the right of nurses to a prescribed and systematised training has been recognised, though the opposition has not yet died down, and, in this country, the General Nursing Council has so far not enforced a prescribed Syllabus of Training enjoined in the Act, but sooner or later this must be done.

The Sister-Tutor has the power to influence the ideals and outlook, as well as the efficiency, of those who will carry the standards of nursing as taught in British hospitals all over the world, and those who will be responsible for the training of nurses in distant parts of the Empire. It is, therefore, scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance of her work. It is much to be hoped that nurses possessing the necessary technical qualifications, and inspired by high ethical and altruistic ideals, will consider the desirability of taking up a branch of work which offers so much interest and so many opportunities for useful service.

THE AUSTRALIAN BRANCH.

We are pleased to have a letter from Miss Penrose, Secretary of the Australian Branch, just as we go to press, which is "good hearing" to the parent Association. The Branch Association appears to be in a most flourishing condition, thanks no doubt to the enthusiasm and administration of the Secretary herself. Miss Penrose is not one of the people who ever writes about herself, but it is easy to read between the lines and to note that she is not only enthusiastic in the interests of her own organisation, but also that she takes an active part in all nursing questions and likes to meet nurses from other countries. Our Australian letters are always interesting, though the news they bring is not confined to the R.B.N.A. In Adelaide there has been considerable difference of opinion as to whether the A.T.N.A. Examination should be taken as qualifying for admission to the State Register. We are very glad to learn that a final decision on this point has just been reached and that the State Council is to remain free from any participation in its examinations by voluntary bodies. The decision of the Council under the Act in South Australia is one of great importance for, not only will it go far to maintain the status of the State Register in South Australia, but it will, by force of precedent, help in protecting other Acts of the same kind from lending themselves to prop up voluntary Associations, while the nurses will have confidence that justice and equal treatment are being maintained for all, without interference from outside.

DONATIONS.

The Hon. Treasurer acknowledges the following donations with thanks:

General Fund.—Misses L. Cheetham, E. Freear, M. Gooding, G. Neighbour, E. Nicholson, 5s.; Miss Le Geyt, 4s.; Miss Wiskin, 3s. 6d.; Misses M. Coates, F. Cross, E. Glanville, E. Mawe, M. Piper, 2s. 6d.; Misses B. McDougall, Page Henderson, Workman, 1s.

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Club Fund.—Miss E. Mawe, 5s.; Edward Domville, Esq., M.D., 5s.; Miss B. Kent, 2s. 6d.; Misses B. McDougall, G. Neighbour, 1s.

ISABEL MACDONALD,

Secretary to the Corporation.

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