

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NURSES.

MORNING SESSION.  
Wednesday, July 22nd

(Continued).

The Discussion on Miss Meyboom's very interesting and able paper on "The Relationship of the School of Nursing to the Hospital" was opened by Miss E. M. Lawler, R.N., Superintendent of the Nurse Training School of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, U.S.A., in the following paper.

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING TO THE HOSPITAL.

Discussion.

When the first three schools of nursing were established in America more than fifty years ago, they were created and supported by groups outside the hospital, and the hospital reluctantly accorded permission for the nurse students to receive their experience in the wards. Before many years had passed, however, the improvement in the care of the patients was so marked that the training school idea spread rapidly, and more and more hospitals adopted it and it soon became the custom to develop a nurses' training school in every new hospital. These schools were established, supported and controlled by the hospitals, and it was not interest in the education of the nurse that caused their establishment, but this was the easiest way of obtaining nursing care for the hospital patients, and it became the primary function of the school to carry on the nursing work and the education of the nurse was secondary. Hospitals developed very rapidly and with them the schools of nursing, each school continuing the early mistakes of those previously in operation, and attempts to improve the standard of nursing education, to standardise the requirements of admission and to safeguard the status of the nurse—indeed any advance that might create conditions which would interfere with the supply of nurses to the hospitals—was bitterly opposed; however, through the years the struggle has gone on constantly, the effort being made by the nurses themselves under the guidance of the leaders of nursing through the nursing organisations, through legislation and by the education of the public.

Thus we have schools supported by the hospitals and the growth and development of the school dependent upon the liberal understanding and attitude of the governing body and also the financial standing of the institution, for funds cannot be obtained for the development of the school if the hospital is being operated with a deficit. This accounts in part for the wide difference that exists between schools, for we have all degrees, from the so-called school that is exploiting its nurses to the extent of adding to the hospital income, to the school that is making a real effort to deal fairly with its students and is sending out well equipped nurses.

During the last few years, notable advance was demonstrated by the affiliation of a small number of schools of nursing with universities, thus providing that the classroom instruction would be of the standard required by the university and given by the university faculty, but with the establishment two years ago of two endowed university schools of nursing, the one at Yale and the other at the Western Reserve University, a tremendous stride forward was taken.

You will remember that in the report of that Committee on "Nursing and Nursing Education," known as the Rockefeller Committee, one conclusion was:—

"That the development of nursing service adequate for the care of the sick and for the conduct of the modern public health campaign demands as an absolute pre-requisite the securing of funds for the endowment of nursing education of all types; and that it is of primary importance, in this connection, to provide reasonably generous endowment for university schools of nursing."

Also elsewhere in the report we find:—

"Various types of organisation under some independent body, with a separate endowment like that of any other educational institution would be among the means of better safeguarding the educational standards of the schools of nursing."

These conclusions expressing the opinion of this Committee of nineteen carefully selected men and women of large experience in nursing education, public health, and hospital work, in connection with the fact that in two instances faith in this idea was expressed by the gift of the sum necessary to provide the endowment for these schools, must carry weight, and we look to these schools to lead the way that others may follow. It is necessary that we demonstrate to the public that schools of nursing if they are to be really educational as well as vocational must be endowed and not

dependent upon the hospital for support, that it is really a community problem, for the demand for competent nurses is increasingly steady and they cannot be supplied unless we develop our schools so they attract the best type of young women. We believe that in America this idea is being slowly accepted. Our schools cannot all be affiliated with universities, indeed it would only be a small part of the approximately eighteen hundred schools in existence to-day that could be, but provided with sufficient endowment, the educational policy of the school controlled by a competent and representative committee, the school would be in a position to develop a relationship with the hospital that would be beneficial to both. The hospital being freed from the necessity of supporting the educational work of the school could provide sufficiently large permanent staff of graduate nurses and nurse helpers to supplement the work of the student nurse, and thus maintain the efficient education of the nurse as well as the adequate care of the patient.



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