

to regain his speech after a stroke, the words that first come to him are those in most common use, and, as nurses know, they are Yes, No, Damn it, Can't afford it.

As doctors and nurses we know that our experience as healers and helpers depends much upon our ability to get into mental touch with our patients, or on our becoming *en rapport* or into mental parallelism with them, and psychology can shorten convalescence—*i.e.*, our appreciation of our patient's mental state can expedite recovery and restoration, and I have been asked to speak of the value and importance of this study for nurses and, I may add, for doctors, too, because my life work—long and arduous—has been on this side.

May I relate an anecdote? A highly accomplished and learned Army chaplain on first contact with "Tommy" at the Front in the late Great War, came to the sad and unfortunate conclusion that Tommies had no mind, and he was confronted with the problem of how to help or teach or even associate with them, but he had a firm faith in human nature as a common denominator for all classes, and he set himself out to discover from his own psychology what they were interested in, and he learnt they all loved two things—*viz.*, good stories, *i.e.*, they were interested in people, and they were interested in good food.

We have all enjoyed your good food to-night, and we have been delighted with your gracious hospitality, but as to stories, men's anecdotes are like their speeches, too often liable to be a weariness to the flesh, and in such a gathering as this, when your guests are grouped together round your hospitable table, they cannot politely rise from their seats, even if bored, and it would be an intolerable infliction if I were to go on until women should step into the breach and save this company from a crisis brought on by the tactlessness of the opposite sex, as I confess they have done on innumerable occasions, public and private.

I should like to express my opinion that an acquaintance with psychology can kindle an interest in others without demanding an effort from them. It can leave something of interest in the mind to think about, apart from abstract thought.

If I may suggest a comparison, surely no motor driver would ever dream of driving his machine without first finding out something about its mechanism, and how it worked. If they neglected this modest preliminary study, as we know, several exciting things might happen. Perhaps the car would refuse to start; or if it started it might refuse to stop, and the driver with his passengers would soon experience thrills, to say the least; yet, in the study of the mind many are perfectly heedless about its mechanism and how it works, although the mind is much more complicated and, may I add, vastly more interesting than the motor car. Fortunately, for most of us, as Glover states, the mind is to a great extent self-acting. But it does sometimes go wrong, yet it is surprising how seldom this occurs, in spite of the fact that it depends on the smooth working of over 9,000 millions of neurons which the American has counted and which he states exist in the average human brain.

When the mind is looked after it is capable of superlative achievements, and psychology will enable us to find pleasure in reading the most conventional novels; it enables us to be happy and bright in the dulllest company, it can transform bores into the most engaging personalities, and it gives the study of children a new significance, besides saving us endless trouble in the acquisition of knowledge.

I venture to think that psychology will help us to pursue our various occupations with greater efficiency, it will help us to use our leisure more happily, and probably to select our husbands and wives. It certainly will prove a great blessing to every one to-day, for it will help us to find pleasure in our work. I trust it may be possible in

this new College of Nurses to find a place for the teaching of elementary psychology. I beg to thank you for your much enjoyed hospitality.

#### Epoch-Making Events in Nursing History.

Miss Isabel Macdonald supporting the Toast, said: Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My subject sounds rather an alarming one for an after dinner speech, but, let me reassure you, I do not intend to take any exhaustive survey of the epoch-making events in Nursing History, but simply and very briefly to place, as it were, a kind of background of history behind the brilliant speech of my colleague, Mrs. Andrews, to put her remarks into that peculiar setting that history gives, to correlate this new movement with other events that have made nursing history. One thing that strikes one in a survey of the History of Nursing is its close connection with the more spiritual aspects of human life, and when I use the word "Spiritual" I would have you take the word as referring, not merely to religion, but to religion, education, culture and so on, as in contrast to politics, economics, equity and the like. If we study nursing history in its earliest beginnings we are not surprised to find these beginnings in the civilisation of Ancient India, that civilisation characterised by its grand idealism, its altruism, sympathy and the like. Into the ancient Persian methods of healing there crept much of what we, in our present day consciousness, regard as superstition and magic, while in the Ancient Egyptian civilisation and the early civilisation of Greece and Rome, the treatment of disease had entered the Mysteries. The old Egyptians were very proud of their great knowledge of medicine, but it is difficult to trace methods of nursing, because the patients were so frequently treated in the Temples. Women served in many of these religious Mystery Temples and may, to some extent, be regarded as the forerunners of the modern nurse. Not long ago I wrote to a famous Egyptologist, whom I have met, asking her whether she could give me any information as regards nursing in these ancient times. All she could tell me was that she had once found the Mummy of an Egyptian Princess which had two great cavities in the muscle, supposed to have been bedsores. This does not speak highly for the practical ability of nurses in Ancient Egyptian times, but, over against this, we have to place the fact that the Egyptians, and often the Greeks and Romans too, paid little attention to incurable cases and the Princess in question may have been such a case.

The Christian Era, with its teaching and good will and love to men, naturally brought new impulses into the development of nursing. In imitation of Phebe of Cenchrea we find a fine group of Patrician Nurses in Rome, in the early centuries of Christianity—the great-hearted Marcella, Olympia with her fine altruism, the scholarly Paula and many others who turned their palaces into hospitals, nursed the sick in their own homes and built shelters and hospitals (hostels as they were called then) on the roads to the Holy City of Jerusalem. Their example was followed throughout Christendom, and we find many ladies of Royal blood imitating it as, for instance, the two Eleanors, Matilda, Phillippa, Margaret of Scotland and others. Many of the Abbesses of olden times in England were connected with the Royal House, or were of noble birth and they ruled with wonderful administrative ability over large communities and the Infirmaries connected with which received a great deal of attention. So did those in connection with all the Monasteries, but, with the Reformation, began what is sometimes termed "The Dark Age of English Nursing History." The Nation did not readily adjust itself to the circumstances arising on the abolition of the Monasteries, so far as the care of the sick was concerned, whilst the nobility and richer sections of the

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