

higher standard than ours, and whose leaders in general nursing are women of considerable intellect and broad vision, who look upon every branch of nursing as of equal national importance, and who by their co-operation have brought them all into line, and who also have introduced a system of reciprocity whereby nurses in training in general nursing go to a psychopathic hospital for a certain period during their course in order to gain experience in psychiatric nursing, and vice versa.

I was fortunate in having a Dutch friend in the audience, who suggested that I should tell them something of the methods adopted at my own hospital (the Kent County Mental Hospital), which she saw last year, and through whose good offices I was permitted to say a few words on mental nursing, and also was able to explain that in England we had formed a Mental Matrons' Association, which had become affiliated with the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, and thus is represented now through this Council on the International Council of Nurses—I said that I considered the time had come for mental nursing to be given a place in it. Thereupon a German representative proposed that a committee on mental nursing and hygiene be formed. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously—a most gratifying result, which was reported to and acted upon by the Board of Directors.

TRAINED NURSING NUNS.

We are pleased to know that our article on the significance of the presence of trained Nursing Nuns at the Interim Nursing Conference at Geneva has aroused much interest, as it was one of the most wonderful events which has evolved in the international relations of nurses, and truly a joyful event to the pioneers of the movement.

Mlle. Chaptal, of the Maison Ecole D'Infirmières Privées, Paris, and President of the National Association of Trained Nurses of France, in expressing thanks for the article in this journal, writes: "This development was up to now quite unknown in foreign countries. Thanks to your journal it will be better spoken of and understood. It is one of the best results achieved in the work of my life, and if I have been a little shy in speaking of it sooner, I had some reasons for waiting. The Geneva Conference has been the opportunity just at the right time; and you, dear Mrs. Fenwick, have been the one who understood the deep meaning of it for the sick of France. Once more, accept my heartiest thanks."

In accepting the beautiful enamelled Badge of the French Flag Nursing Corps, worn by the 250 thoroughly trained British Sisters who worked devotedly in French Hospitals in this Corps directly under the French War Office, from 1914 to 1919, Mlle. Chaptal writes: "I was glad to read the accounts of your beautiful work during the war. Of course, I knew something of it, but not enough. The precious Badge will be kept as a very sweet remembrance . . ."

Mlle. Chaptal is looking forward to the time when she can visit London as our guest. Members of our National Council will, we feel sure, give her a warm welcome. It will be long before they forget her brilliant work as interpreter on the Geneva platform—French-English-German (and we believe Russian, had it been necessary) flowed as to the manner born from her fluent tongue. It is interesting to know that her mother spoke eight languages with ease, and that from her youth up Mlle. Chaptal learned from her to converse in four.

Alas! how tongue-tied is the average Anglo-Saxon! It is time we realised how disadvantageous such ignorance is in furthering international relations with our professional sisters.

ASILE DE BEL-AIR, À CHÈNE.

With the very kind co-operation of Miss Reimann, the Secretary of the International Council of Nurses, by letter of introduction, I was privileged to see over the Mental Hospital, Asile de Bel-Air à Chêne, at Geneva, situated a considerable distance out of the town in beautiful rural surroundings. Upon arrival I was received with great courtesy by the Medical Director, who spoke French, and as my French vocabulary was rather limited and his English equally so, I had visions of my visit not being a specially instructive one. However, to my relief, he said in French that he would bring one of his assistants who spoke a little English, and would take me round.

The structure of the Hospital itself is on the Villa System, and very charming. All the patients whose mental condition permitted them to be out of doors were basking in most wonderful sunshine.

I was taken to the Reception Hospital on the female side, where all new patients are admitted, and where I found one of the wards which was very bright and cheerful, containing about ten beds all occupied by patients recently admitted, who are kept there under close observation for further mental developments. Should more acute symptoms occur they are transferred to another villa where hydropathic and other methods of treatment are adopted. Drugs are given more freely than with us. Seclusion of patients is very much in use, a practice which is becoming obsolete in modern nursing of the mentally sick.

I was gratified to be assured that there was no mechanical restraint and there is no forcible feeding. On the refusal of patients to take food they are enticed with various forms of chocolate and fruit. In this way a certain amount of nourishment is taken which is gradually increased in quantity until the normal is reached.

Occupational therapy is encouraged.

Some of the women were busily engaged in the national art of Swiss embroidery.

There is a commodious little church in the grounds, the structure of which is perfectly plain within and without, and serves the two prevalent forms of religion—viz., Calvinism and Roman Catholicism; there being no State Church. The Calvinist and Roman Catholic services are held each alternate Sunday. The church also serves for the purpose of entertainments, such as concerts, etc.

If I may be permitted to criticise, I should like to have seen more of the hospital atmosphere, and the nurses' uniform impressed me as looking rather obsolete in style compared with the present-day uniforms in most of our own mental hospitals. It would appear from what I saw, both in general and mental hospitals, that the heads of the respective nursing staffs are not entitled "Matron" and do not get the same status as with us, nor is the standard of training as high as is our own hospitals, though the period of training is the same.

The present existing conditions I have no doubt, will speedily improve on the emancipation of the Swiss nurse.

E. L. MACAULAY.

MESSAGE OF THANKS.

The following message of thanks has been received from the relatives of the late Miss Flora Madeline Shaw:—

"We, the family, wish to express our grateful appreciation of the sympathy and esteem expressed by the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, and the beautiful flowers sent in memory of Flora Madeline Shaw."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)