

be to provide alternative accommodation for those mental defectives whose condition no longer requires active hospital treatment and who would be suitable for transfer to a colony. Owing to the delay in providing accommodation for defectives it has been the practice in many areas to certify under the Lunacy Acts lower grade defectives who could far more suitably have been dealt with in colonies had these been available. The Board believe that there is no other way in which the present overcrowding can be remedied at so small a cost. It is pointed out that colony beds for defectives can be provided at about £300 a bed, whereas mental hospital beds are estimated at £500. Moreover mental defectives can be far more effectively dealt with in colonies specially designed for their care and treatment.

#### Occupational Therapy.

Urging the need for occupational therapy in mental hospitals, the Report states that it is distressing to go round the wards and to find scores of patients left to deteriorate in wearisome idleness. It is bad for them and bad for the staff. The idle patient has far too much time to brood over his real or imaginary troubles; he is a burden to himself and to others.

Advocating gardening as an occupation which had been found very popular in some hospitals, the Board state: "We have seen a remarkable rock garden which is the pride and joy of a homicidal patient who was previously a source of considerable anxiety to the attendants. In this connection we are glad to note that good progress is being made with the planting of ward gardens."

The Board would like to see formed in each area a body of "Friends of the Hospital" or Colony, one of whose objects should be to raise an entertainment fund which would meet the cost of outings for suitable patients. Members of such a body might adopt friendless patients, sending them small letters and gifts. They could also support the sales of work organised at Christmas time.

#### Books for Patients.

A department of mental hospitals which deserves more attention than it generally receives is the library, and in response to the Board's request special attention is being given to this branch of the work by the Red Cross and Order of St. John Hospitals Library.

"Books which are popular in the world outside are the books which patients want. A generation accustomed to Edgar Wallace will not, even in dementia, take kindly to Victorian sentimentality or the 'life and remains' of eminent divines."

#### Suicides.

In the cases of suicide reported, three are referred to as of special interest to Nurses.

1. A patient who had attempted self-strangulation was brought under treatment after respiration had stopped. But by the persistent efforts of the staff in carrying on artificial respiration and other treatment for two hours, respiration was finally re-established.

2. A patient not known to be suicidal jumped into a hot bath which was being prepared by the nurse, and sustained scalds from the effects of which she died. The nurse's attention had been diverted for a moment by the violent resistiveness of another patient in the bath room.

3. A patient set fire to herself when the night nurse, in the process of trimming the fire, left the room to bring in coal. The opening in the fire-guard had been left unlocked.

These cases demonstrate the value of persistent effort in the application of artificial respiration, and the need for constant watchfulness, alertness, and conscientious observance of rules in nurses entrusted with the care of mental patients.

## NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

### INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

A Preliminary Programme of the Congress of the International Council of Nurses to be held in Paris-Brussels from July 10th to 15th, 1933, has been issued from Headquarters at Geneva—as drafted by the Programme Committee. This Programme is open to revision and will be considered by the Executive Committee of our National Council at its meeting on Wednesday, October 19th next.

The Board of Directors of the I.C.N. will meet in Paris from July 4th to 6th, and the Grand Council of the I.C.N. from July 7th to 8th, so that the Official Delegates will need to attend the business fixtures for ten days at least. This somewhat extended duty must be taken into consideration by those national representatives who accept nomination for election at the Annual Meeting in November.

### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The Meeting of the Executive Committee of the N.C.N. will be held on Wednesday, October 19th, at 4.15 p.m., at 39, Portland Place, London, W.1. Tea will be served at 4 p.m.

### LEAGUE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL NURSES.

The Summer Meeting of the League of St. Bartholomew's Nurses was held on Saturday afternoon, July 2nd. There was a good attendance at the General Meeting, which was held in the Lecture Room of the Nurses' Home.

Miss G. H. Simms, Matron of the Royal Waterloo Hospital, was elected Vice-President. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the retiring Vice-President, Dame Ann Beadsmore Smith, whose period of office of three years had been of incalculable value to the League.

The meeting was a particularly auspicious one, in view of the report of the Secretary and Treasurer of the "Isla Stewart Memorial Fund," by the announcement that a £50 Bursary had been awarded to Miss M. G. Pennick, who is to take the recognised course in Public Health work at the College of Nursing. Miss Pennick, who was certificated at the Hospital in 1928, will therefore be the second "Isla Stewart" scholar. Miss Rundle, R.R.C., D.N., the first "Isla Stewart" scholar, now Vice-President of the League, who was present, wished her every success.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the retiring members of the League. The four newly-elected members are Miss K. Lowe, R.R.C.; Miss M. Riddell, R.R.C.; Miss E. Campbell; and Miss Bennett.

The annual social gathering in the Grand Hall was well attended. The guests were received by Miss Dey (President), and the felicitous welcome with which members are now so happily familiar created the cheerful atmosphere to which League gatherings so valuably give occasion.

Here, too, there was a great opportunity for showering congratulations on Miss Musson, C.B.E., R.R.C., for the Degree of Hon. Doctor of Law conferred on her by the University of Leeds.

Among the guests, Presidents of other Leagues, who honoured the social gathering with their presence, were Miss Lloyd Still (President of the Nightingale League), and representatives from the Leicester Royal Infirmary and University College.

Members took this opportunity of visiting the beautiful garden made in memory of their son, Nigel, by Sir Herbert and Lady Cohen, which has most effectively filled the space between the new Surgical Block and Queen Mary's Nurses' Home. The garden is laid out in a semi-circular design of red tiles, and at the further end, where it cannot fail to strike the eye, is a most artistic stone seat, with the back

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