

nurses. It was a cultural subject, and instruction in it was being encouraged by the Board of Education.

The whole of *Section 3* was based on a misapprehension. It was no use thinking of the subject (preliminary teaching) in terms of the training given in the big hospitals.

In relation to *Section 5* the training at Leeds to which it referred was outside the question.

The speaker said he wished to make clear to the Council that it was proposed that the training to be given in schools before candidates entered the hospitals for training should be optional. It would enable girls to bridge the gap between leaving school and entering hospitals, and it would also give relief to many from the mental and intellectual strain of the first year's work.

In conclusion Dr. Eason said that Dr. Porter, who was unable to be present, commissioned him to say that he whole-heartedly supported the proposal of the amendment; and the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education were both in favour of some such step as this.

The Chairman informed Dr. Eason that he was not in order in communicating the opinion of the Ministries to the Council. It had had no such intimation from them, and if they wished their views expressed to it they would no doubt communicate them officially. She suggested that Dr. Eason should withdraw that statement.

Dr. Eason said that perhaps it need not be reported—if the Debate was reported.

Miss Cox Davies supported the withdrawal of the statement.

Dr. Eason then withdrew it.

#### DISCUSSION.

Miss Lloyd Still, referring to the claim that the subjects of Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene could be taught in the ordinary schools, said that all the candidates did not come from high schools, a proportion came from the secondary schools.

Miss Helen Dey supported what Dr. Eason had said.

The Viscountess Erleigh also supported the amendment. She thought the educational value of its proposals immense.

The Countess of Limerick, who said that she had had five years' experience in hospitals though she had no technical qualifications, thought the proposal invaluable. Many parents were anxious to let their daughters stay on at school. This would give them a definite objective. She did not see that it should affect the selection of candidates by the Matron.

Miss E. Cockeram said she felt the Council could not accept the Amendment to Recommendation 15 of the Education Committee as put forward, and they could not accept the principle of a division of the Preliminary State Examination. She wished to put all the weight she could against this proposed division of the teaching of Physiology, Anatomy and Hygiene, and preparation for this examination in schools, and to say that she was in entire agreement with the points put forward in the Memorandum sent out from Leeds. She emphasised the following points:—

(1) That having considered the question from all points of view, she thought it would be a retrograde step.

(2) That there was extremely little demand for this division, and it was acknowledged by the promoters that only a few would benefit. It seemed to her that exactly because it was elementary teaching in anatomy and physiology which was required, it must be given in the hospitals in a way suited to the nurses' work.

(3) That far from raising the standard of candidates there was a grave risk, that, as any school of any type or class could prepare girls for the examination in anatomy, physiology and hygiene, many candidates would be able to learn certain facts and phrases and so have sufficient book knowledge to pass the examination without any of

the real practical knowledge required by nurses in these subjects.

(4) The statement made in regard to over-work in these subjects and the very frequent breakdown in health of probationers during the first year, was not proved either by figures or facts. During the first year the probationer had little real responsibility with regard to her patients, and her times off duty were now longer, her hours of study were well regulated, and there should be no difficulty with the ordinary girl. No class of student was better, nor, she ventured to say, so well looked after as regards mental and bodily health as our probationers, and she was sure that too much stress was laid on the hard-worked and over-worked probationer.

Finally, she considered that any step taken to alter the present arrangements or preparation for examination in Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene would be a grave mistake, and that these subjects must be taught in hospital by professional men and women. In conclusion, she maintained that this could be done normally, and without undue over-work, during the first sixteen to eighteen months in hospital.

Dr. Collins supported all that Dr. Eason had said. There would, he said, be no compulsion, but girls would be attracted to remain at school. Nursing was the practical side of medicine, of looking after the sick. It would be advantageous if during their first year in hospital nurses had to study less anatomy and physiology. A Report of a Government Actuary stated that the breakdown of nurses was phenomenal.

The Chairman said that this Report did not apply to nurses as a whole, it referred to mental hospitals only.

Miss M. E. Sparshott said that, speaking with 28 years' experience as a Matron, she was in favour of the amendment, as if some subjects were taken before entering hospitals she thought it would make the strain for probationers less, and the work more interesting.

Miss M. A. Gullan said she could not agree that the professional subjects of Anatomy and Physiology could be effectively taught by the school alone, and, therefore, she was against the division of the Preliminary State Examination. She personally felt nothing but gratitude towards the Headmistresses of the secondary and higher grade schools who were willing to co-operate with the General Nursing Council in procuring educated candidates for the Nursing Profession by supplying an advanced course on the basic sciences of physics, chemistry, and perhaps biology. At present, even well-educated candidates were lamentably ignorant of physics and chemistry, and these subjects were most important to a good understanding of the principles underlying nursing treatments, dietetics, etc. If biology were added, the special subjects of anatomy and physiology would be more readily assimilated when their time came. Should the curriculum allow, the inclusion of these last would be quite helpful in preparing for a more useful interpretation of them during the period of training.

Anatomy and physiology presented no real difficulty, as taught by the doctor and revised by the Sister-Tutor. It was the paucity of the pupil; general knowledge; the poor mental development that were the trouble.

She had been teaching nurses for many years, and she knew by experience how they forgot a subject like anatomy.

She had had many pupils who had been given a year's course in anatomy and physiology at school, but, barring a little facility in recovering forgotten terms, the advantages had been negligible. When asked, they invariably said that the subjects were so differently taught in hospital.

A very real difficulty to the Sister Tutor's work was the training of the nurse to apply her knowledge—to think about it—to see its practical import, and if anatomy and physiology were to be of any professional value they must

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