

he could remember the type of nursing that prevailed before the Association established its branch.

THE HISTORY AND ROMANCE OF TEA.

We had a most racy and instructive lecture by Mrs. Lidderdale on the History and Romance of Tea, and it was astonishing into how many branches of art, history, tradition and travel we were introduced. Her slides, too, were most beautiful and in great variety. They varied from scenes from great London business houses to quaint old pictures from the seventeenth century onwards. In one in particular we were reminded of the adage "God sent the food but the devil sent the cook," when she showed to us a maid, in an old picture, bringing the kettle to the teapot instead of bringing the teapot to the kettle. We do not know how long tea has been used in China but some people claim that it was in use 2,000 years before the Christian era. It is called by the Japanese the cup of a thousand virtues and Mrs. Lidderdale repeated the legend of the origin of tea, relating to the holy man and his struggles against sleep during his meditations.

Katherine of Braganza first introduced tea into England; a gift of it was sent to Scotland where the recipients proceeded to boil it and to eat the leaves after throwing away the water. The people of Japan are said to have learnt their beautiful manners in their artistic tea rooms. A picture was shown of Dr. Johnson drinking tea with Sarah Siddons; the former used to say that he drank tea to amuse himself in the afternoons, to solace himself at night and to welcome the morning. "In fact," he said, "his teapot was never cool."

OBITUARY.

It is with deep regret that we have to report the death of Miss Annie M. Tisdall, who has for many years been a Member of the Association and who was always exceedingly generous to its benevolent activities. Miss Tisdall was trained at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, and later held the post of Home Sister at Mill Road Infirmary, Liverpool. From there she went to Stockport Infirmary as Sister but was compelled to relinquish her professional career for several years for family reasons.

Miss Tisdall had a very kindly disposition and was most popular among her colleagues while her Association is poorer for the loss of a Member who was interested in all its activities.

194, Queen's Gate,
London, S.W.7.

ISABEL MACDONALD,
Secretary to the Corporation.

THE EVOLUTION OF NURSING SCHOOLS IN BRAZIL.*

By Idalia de Araujo PORTO-ALEGRE.

Treasurer of the Ladies' Committee of the Brazilian Red Cross and Secretary of the Nursing School.

In olden times the nursing profession in Brazil was primitive in the extreme, not to say non-existent. The care of the sick was entrusted to slaves or, in the case of the very poor, to relatives or neighbours ignorant of the most elementary notions of medicine and hygiene. The coloured servants administered potions and remedies to the patient, and the ladies of the house complacently assumed that their own affection and solicitude were sufficient to cure any disease, however grave.

With the passage of time these conceptions obviously underwent drastic change but, until the beginning of the twentieth century, the situation was still far from satisfactory. Persons engaged in tending the sick were not

obliged to have any professional training; they acquired a smattering of practical experience in the course of their ministrations, but, for the most part, they had only the vaguest notion of what they were doing or why they were doing it. They looked upon their profession solely as a means of earning a living, and the only thing that counted for them was the money they received; the idea of introducing sentiment and devotion into their work never for a moment occurred to them. The nursing vocation as we know it to-day had yet to be born, or, if it existed, it had certainly not made its appearance among the women who took up nursing in those days, for whom the patient was merely a tiresome accessory in the process of gaining a livelihood.

The nursing profession, in those days, was looked upon with such contumely in Brazil that when the school, known to-day as the Alfredo Pinto School and the School for Psychopaths, was founded in September 1890, it had to close down after a few months because of the lack of pupils.

It was left to the Brazilian Red Cross to revolutionize this attitude by organising, in October 1914, the first courses for volunteer nurses. The society ladies who took these courses helped to instil in the public consciousness a higher conception of the nurse's mission. Nevertheless, it was not until March 1926 that, under the auspices of the Red Cross, the first course for professional nurses was instituted.

The girls of good family who enrolled for this course may consequently be regarded as the pioneers of nursing in Brazil.

The courses started in a very humble way in a hired hall. At the beginning, a year's training was considered sufficient, but this period was subsequently doubled, and has now been extended to two years and nine months. The school soon deserted the hired hall for a house of its own pending installation in its present magnificent quarters.

There has been a corresponding evolution in the conditions for admission to the course. Whereas proficiency in the "three r's" was the only qualification required of the first candidates, those who enrolled later were expected to present a certificate showing that they had completed their primary studies, while to-day nothing less than a secondary school diploma will be accepted as qualifying candidates for admission to the course.

A few months after the Red Cross course was started, the Anna Nery School was founded by the Ministry of Public Health with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation. In view of the lack of trained nursing personnel in Brazil at that time, the school was staffed by sister tutors brought from the United States, but these have gradually been replaced by home-trained women so that to-day, with the exception of the directress, the entire teaching staff is composed of Brazilian nurses.

A course of three years' training is given at the Anna Nery School, and candidates for admission are required to possess a secondary school diploma. Practical experience is gained at the St. Francis d'Assisi Hospital, where a certain number of wards is reserved for the student nurses.

Both at the Anna Nery School and at the Brazilian Red Cross school, the moral and intellectual level of the students is in constant progression. The same tendency characterises the resuscitated Alfredo Pinto Hospital and School for Psychopaths to whose discouraging start I referred earlier in this article. Obviously much still remains to be done in the nursing field in Brazil; it will probably be a long time before we catch up with the countries whose nursing systems go back several decades but I think we may claim to have diminished their lead very considerably during the last nine years. Our aim must be to increase the number of nursing schools so that professional nurses will be available in sufficient numbers in every possible circumstance; only then will the untrained mercenary be definitely relegated to the forgotten past.

*We quote this very interesting article from the *Monthly Bulletin* of the League of Red Cross Societies.

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