

and in one of the departments there was a school of public health nursing at the head of which was a very capable nurse. In this department there was a special long course in public health, but there was also a six months' course for nurses who had just entered hospitals. The nurses sent were selected from three or four different training schools and the classes were not too large, so that individual instruction and supervision was possible. The subjects taught were the same as those our nurses require for the State Preliminary Examination, namely, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, cookery, etc.

I was very struck by the interest of the teachers—who were not nurses—in the nursing aspect of their students, and by their understanding of the need of the hospitals. For example, in hygiene, when showing ventilation, water supplies, and such details, they had models of different kinds of ventilation in modern hospitals, methods of sterilising, and in cookery they had the different kinds of stoves—electric, gas, coke—to show the nurse that she should be accustomed to all, if later she took up district work.

The actual rudiments of nursing were taught at each different hospital. The lay and nurse teachers met once or twice a term to discuss the suitability and progress of their students, and their opinions generally coincided.

This particular central preliminary training school had proved successful over a long period of years and a healthy competition arose between the candidates sent by the various hospitals. The cost of the school was largely defrayed by the students' fees.

The approach to education authorities is, I am sure, a step in the right direction for progress in Nursing Education; but I would like to emphasise the fact that if new schools and colleges are brought into being, the control of the syllabus taught must be in the hands of the nursing profession. In other words, there must be at least equal representation on joint governing boards or committees. Otherwise the hospitals will be foregoing all educational responsibility and the Nursing Profession will have sold its birthright.

May I conclude by saying that health, intelligence and culture are essentials, not frills, to girls who wish to enter the nursing profession; and we must demand certain personal qualities, such as resourcefulness, initiative, and a strong sense of responsibility in our candidates; and finally we must all courageously face our present-day professional difficulties and ensure that in the future every student nurse will be well taught and trained in the knowledge and skill requisite to the practice of nursing.

We have standing and had hoped to publish this month a report of this whole session, including Miss A. E. Merry's instructive Paper on "The Value of State Examination," and the interesting Discussion which followed, but regret that as it was necessary, at the earliest possible moment to call the attention of Registered Nurses to the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services, we must defer their publication to next month.

#### THE PASSING BELL.

The news of the tragic death of Miss J. P. Watt, on January 23rd, late Inspector of the Queen's Institute of District Nursing, who recently retired after 29 years' service, will come as a shock to her colleagues, by whom she was deservedly respected. It would appear that Miss Watt, by some mistake, was electrocuted whilst using an electric cooker, at her home at Bridge of Weir, Scotland.

Miss Watt was an outstanding personality in these days of diffidence, and spoke her mind with no uncertainty when conscience prompted her to do so. We record her sudden death with very sincere regret.

## THE NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

### MASS MEETING OF NURSES CONVENED BY THE COLLEGE OF NURSING. A GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON.

The Mass Meeting for Nurses arranged by the College of Nursing at the Caxton Hall on January 24th, was so largely attended that it was necessary to arrange for an overflow meeting in the smaller hall above that in which the main meeting took place. Miss M. Reynolds, Matron of the London Hospital, was in the Chair. Various representatives of the College spoke on different sections of its activities and questions were invited from the floor. There was no lack of these, but the replies to them did not lead very far. The matter of the future of the refugees to be trained as nurses in certain hospitals was evidently one that has assumed considerable importance in the perspective of the nurses' minds, for there were several questions on the matter. The drift of these questions was a desire to ascertain whether these nurses were, when trained, to have their names placed on the State Register and take their place, from a national point of view, as nurses recognised by the State on the same footing as British Nurses, thus entering into economic competition with the latter. No satisfactory answer was forthcoming. In one hall the chairman said that the question was "a wide one," in the other a long reply was given by one speaker but it gave no actual information on the future of these nurses.

A good deal of discussion arose on the State Examinations. One speaker enquired how many retired matrons and nurses were still examining who could not be regarded as possessed of up-to-date knowledge of latter day nursing developments. This question was not answered. A question followed as to whether the speaker on the work of the College in relation to education would be in favour of an examination for examiners. The reply was that, although there was something in such an idea, if the proposition were adopted it would lead to an examination for examiners of examiners and so on *ad infinitum*. The speaker from the floor suggested that this position need not arise if the examiners entered for the same test as the teacher the results of whose work they examined, *i.e.*, one or other of the examinations established for Sister Tutors would meet the case as a beginning at least.

Another asked why it was that the College had been in existence for twenty-two years and yet the position of nurses was such that it had been necessary to appoint a Departmental Committee to enquire into nursing conditions. Admittedly, salaries were larger than they were twenty years ago, but this was the case in all branches of work, the natural outcome of events. There were many of these questions dealing with economics. One speaker on the platform held that the salaries of public health nurses had improved recently, and this was strongly denied by a speaker from the gallery, who instanced certain cases in which she considered that the nurse was placed at a great disadvantage in comparison with other public health workers. Points were raised in connection with the age limit of candidates for public health appointments. Women of twenty-five were given appointments who could not have the experience for teaching mothers while those who had reached thirty-five years of age were practically debarred from admission to most public health appointments.

One speaker raised the question as to whether coercion was used in getting nurses to join the Student Nurses' Association. The reply from the platform was "not from the College," but the questioner did not pursue the point as to the influence used for this form of recruitment by matrons and sister tutors. A question as to whether the Governors and Boards of the Hospital knew of the "tax"

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