

ANOTHER CANTOR LECTURE.

ANÆSTHETICS.

One recent Cantor lecture on Anæsthetics delivered at the Royal Society of Arts by F. T. Evans, M.B., B.S., D.A., was extremely interesting. It dealt with the history of the apparatus which has been used in the past, and brought us up to date, tracing the gradual improvements in the apparatus which have been gradually evolved as our knowledge of the subject has grown. The modern anæsthetic trolley which was shown provides for the use of all the substances now placed at our disposal by the chemists.

Dr. Evans started the lecture on a slightly metaphysical note, saying how little was known about what really happened to the consciousness of a person when under the effects of an anæsthetic. The physical effects, he said, are understood to some extent. There is thought to be interference with fat metabolism, the myelin tissue of the nervous system being affected and so shutting off the nerve impulses.

With the outward signs every anæsthetist is very familiar. The gradual cessation of each reflex until all are lost. The successive stages are: the period of induction; the analgesic stage when all sense of pain is lost; then the period of excitement when anything may happen from slight movement on the part of the patient to a "rough house"; then stage of complete unconsciousness; lastly the stage of overdose. The depth of the anæsthetic is important to the surgeon. Complete relaxation of all the muscles is one of the factors which have made abdominal surgery possible.

He then went on to mention the great controversy which raged at one time over the respective merits of ether and chloroform. This raged for some time and in many countries, England taking a middle course and deciding that a mixture of ether, alcohol and chloroform was the safest. A mixture which was popular for many years. With the development of chemistry many more substances have been added to the anæsthetist's armoury. Some given by other means than the inhalation route.

Many famous names were mentioned as the lecture progressed: Simpson, Morton, Junker, Clover and many others. To all of us these are household words. Displayed and shown during the course of the lecture were some curious old pieces of apparatus. Some were actual pieces used by the anæsthetists of old and were museum pieces. It was interesting to trace the addition of improvements as they were evolved by one or another of these men through time.

The lecture ended with a brief mention of the many types of inhalation anæsthetics which can be given to-day. They have advantages and disadvantages, but provide a wide choice for the anæsthetist. We have not ceased to use ether and chloroform, however; both have a permanent place.

It was a very interesting lecture, full of a wealth of detail which it is not possible to bring into a brief résumé such as this.

U. SPON.

We much appreciate the invitations sent to us by the Council of the Royal Society of Arts to attend their lectures which always prove to be full of interest and information to our profession.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

A Meeting of the Grand Council of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was held at Riddell House, St. Thomas's Hospital, by kind permission of Miss M. Smyth, Matron, on May 22nd, 1948.

Miss D. C. Bridges, President, presided.

The Death of Miss G. V. Hillyers, O.B.E., S.R.N., D.N.

The President reported the sudden death of Miss G. V. Hillyers on May 19th, and paid high tribute to her indefatigable work for the Profession of Nursing. Those present stood in silence to her memory.

Business arising out of the Minutes.

The President reported that, on the approach of the Danish Council of Nurses, 26 British nurses out of 50 invited have applied to spend a holiday in Denmark, and in exchange 39 Danish nurses were coming to Britain.

It was hoped that the Danish nurses would be well entertained and looked after while here; very interesting programmes had been arranged for the visit of the British nurses to Denmark.

Welcome to New Members.

The President welcomed five new member associations of nurses to the National Council:

- The Royal Hants County Hospital Nurses' League.
- The St. Helier's Hospital Nurses' League.
- The Leicester City General Hospital Nurses' League.
- The Whipps Cross Hospital Nurses' League.
- The Kent and Sussex Hospital Nurses' League.

Correspondence.

From correspondence reported it was learned that £510 15s. 3d. had been collected from member associations in the National Council of Nurses and despatched to the Lord Mayor of London's United Nations Appeal Fund for Children of Devastated Countries.

It was also suggested that to meet the budget of the International Council of Nurses, it might be necessary to double the per capita dues paid by this Council to the International Council of Nurses.

The Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee had notified the Florence Nightingale International Foundation that there were not sufficient funds available to put forward a British scholar this year.

The names of Miss D. Dickinson and Miss M. Smyth had gone forward as National Council of Nurses delegates on the Committee of Management, Florence Nightingale International Foundation, for a further period.

A letter was reported from the Canadian Nurses' Association in connection with exchange of nurses, on a reciprocal basis for a year, Miss Ethel Johns, Chairman, being willing to sponsor suitable applicants.

A Memorandum was reported from the American Nurses' Association for British nurses to study, observe and take up positions in America through the National Council of Nurses.

The President's Address.

The President reported that the General Nursing Council for England and Wales had offered the National Council of Nurses two offices at 17, Portland Place, London, at a yearly rental of £100 each, which it was agreed to accept.

The President reported that it had been proposed to set up a Western Europe Nursing Group, to work on the same lines as the Northern Nurses' League, which consists of nurses from Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden.

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