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Editorial.

The True Spirit.

WE ARE LIVING IN AN AGE OF CHANGE—the tempo of life has quickened considerably. The wheels of “possibility” in our world of nursing would appear to be turning more swiftly. Many hospitals have been enlarged and new departments have sprung up within them. There is a new look in many of the Wards and Nurses’ Homes. Revolution is in progress, and like every transitional condition, it has an upsetting and almost bewildering effect on the various members of our profession. Is it not all the more necessary, therefore, that everything possible should be done to ensure stability and continuity? But one of the main foundations is a sense of community, and all efforts should be made to foster and strengthen the feeling that we are all part of a whole, with a common centre and mutual purpose.

In the old days, before hospitals had become a combination of groups, staffs of individual hospitals lived more for themselves, and within themselves. Life was simpler in many instances, less convenient and certainly harder in many ways, but there were compensations. Staffs were more concerned with communal affairs, though many of them seldom travelled. They provided their own entertainment, and were alive acutely to the necessity for well-being within their particular hospital.

Looking back, the conditions of the past may appear to have been restricted, but again there were advantages. Although we cannot back-pedal to other years, and it might be neither wise nor desirable to do so, even if we could, still would it not be beneficial to endeavour to revive and recapture something of the old community intimacy, co-operation and intense local allegiance and pride is always good when it is wholesome and intelligent, and not narrow parochialism. It indicates that people are rooted in a place and surely mortals, like trees, are better to have a firm grip of a particular plot of earth. They are then not so easily cast down, or uprooted by blast or trial. The individual hospitals owe much to the fact that trainees in the past, had a strong sense of local pride. This provided the essential incentive and propulsion to live worthily and maintain tradition of community and locality. Those within our profession found purpose and satisfaction in communal, as well as personal proprietary, and in winning and retaining the respect of our patients and colleagues. How many leaving their hospital to go out into an even wider world, did not draw strength and inspiration from the love of the old training school and their desire to gain esteem from those remaining within. Local pride was a flame

in the heart which warmed and steeled all exiles, and wherever they were, they retained interest in local affairs, were pleased and proud to return “home” to their hospital and renew the feeling of being part of a community from whom they sprang.

Local patriotism is the door to the wider love in our profession and part in the world as a whole. Anyone devoid of affection and loyalty for a particular place is hardly likely to have a strong love and loyalty for country, nor is he or she likely to possess a deep love of humanity. A speaker recently described a community as being likened to the small wheel in a watch—the others, indeed the whole, are inseparably associated with it and dependent upon its smooth and harmonious effectiveness. Any faulty movement or part would cause discordance and the whole would become affected. The greater should depend upon the lesser, and the lesson and moral should be clear.

Those at this time taking part in our great profession should seek to foster and strengthen the necessary pride in rendering very specially during this transitional period, only the highest service to our patients, bearing in mind the necessity for care in the smallest, or what would appear to be the most trivial duties of the daily round. Give credit generously to those with whom we come in contact, who deserve it. Appreciation is a very sure sign that we are not too engrossed with ourselves to take an interest in others, and the root of appreciation is surely awareness, recognising anew the things which we are prone to take for granted.

The result of the right attitude can only prove worthwhile to all who give and all who receive, for like the “quality of mercy” the spirit of appreciation blesses him that gives, as well as him that receives, and it also inspires greater effort in others. “Let us provoke one another into love and good works”—such must be our aim and our reward will be inestimable.

MARGARET B. MACKELLAR.

NAPT United Kingdom Essay Prize.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION for the Prevention of Tuberculosis has pleasure in announcing that the prize of 100 guineas offered for the best essay on the control of tuberculosis in the United Kingdom, by chest physicians of not more than ten years’ standing, has been awarded to Dr. W. H. Tattersall, Chest Physician at Bournemouth. The Prize will be presented to Dr. Tattersall at the NAPT Council meeting on October 4th.

Dr. P. G. Arblaster (Leamington Spa) and Dr. M. B. Paul (Leeds) were placed second and third in the competition.

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