

difficulties of supplying it will take the matter up and that something definite will be arranged.

The discussion hinged chiefly on the subject of having a holiday home in the Hills where Indian Nurses could spend their vacations from hospital work, particularly pupil nurses. Some of the Superintendents felt it to be a great need.

Miss Creighton.—I have been thinking of it for six years, and hoping that it might be done. To build a little house would be cheaper than renting one, and there need be no great outlay for furniture. The nurses would cook their own food, etc.

In Government and Civil Hospitals the girls always want to go home.

Girls who come from orphanages usually look forward to going back for their holidays. It is true, however, that the rest and change of going to the Hills would be much more beneficial to them.

[The Europeanizing of Indian girls with regard to their recreation and standard of living is deprecated; the differences of nationality and climate have to be considered; their physique resulting from generations of zenana life is not to be compared with that of an English school-girl, their physical energies are probably always sufficiently and often unduly taxed, so that *recreation* will be found on lines of repose—a taste and opportunities for reading taking the foremost place. These remarks do not apply to those of mixed race.—EDITOR.]

Miss Steen read a paper on her experience in training midwives and nurses.

THE TRAINING OF UNEDUCATED INDIAN WOMEN AS NURSES AND MIDWIVES

The Possibilities, Difficulties and Usefulness of doing so.

THE ideal Indian nurse, namely, the educated elderly Christian woman of 25 to 35 is all but unknown. It is possible to get young educated girls of 17 to 20 to train as nurses who, when their training is finished likely get married, or if they remain unmarried they are not much more useful than during their training for undertaking responsibility, nor can they be allowed to go to bazaar cases, nor to undertake private nursing and so they must be kept as Hospital nurses under constant supervision. As education increases, there is the hope that in the future it may be possible to get educated women to train, but at present as a rule the Indian Christian woman over 25, wishing to be a nurse, is uneducated.

The uneducated woman, while at times the difficulties in training her seem insurmountable, if intelligent does repay the trouble taken. She seems to be more sympathetic, more interested in, and more willing to take trouble for, her patient than our younger nurses.

nurse for her holiday. I suppose the majority of our nurses come from orphanages and have no home to which they can go, or if they have it is generally in the plains, probably in a city in a crowded *basti* where fresh air and good food are unobtainable, and in either case, whether they go to the orphanage or their own home they get no fresh interests, nothing to lift them out of themselves and their talk is all of hospital.

I know it has been in the minds of many Nursing Superintendents that a holiday home for nurses is a great need—a home in the lower hill stations. Such places as Sanawar, Kasauli, Roorkee and Dehra Dun have been suggested.

The great difficulty, of course, is the initial outlay and then the upkeep. This would have to be met by various hospitals and schools contributing a certain amount yearly to cover the rent, house-servants, etc. Each girl would have to pay about Rs. 5 or 6 per month towards her board. Nurses or teachers coming from hospitals and schools which do not subscribe should pay at a higher rate, from Rs. 10 to 15. It is necessary that the home should be in charge of a European lady, perhaps some one who cannot live in the plains during the hot weather, or perhaps each Mission in turn would supply a worker for a certain period and probably for the first year or two the home would only be open for six or seven months.

A bungalow, large enough to accommodate six to eight girls and the Miss Sahiba would have to be rented for the season. This would cost Rs. 500 to 800. I am told it would contain most of the necessary furniture, such as chairs, tables, almirahs and bath-room furniture, so that there would only be *charpais*, cooking utensils and perhaps extra chairs, to provide. The staff of servants necessary would be a cook-woman, whose wages for six months would be from Rs. 40 to 50, a *mehtar* and *bihisti*, combined wages Rs. 100 to 120. A superior Christian woman to chaperone the girls, Rs. 90 to 100.

In addition there would be the Miss Sahiba who would require a cook and a house servant, then *dhoby*, oil, coal, etc., have to be added, so that altogether the expenses for the six months would come to Rs. 1,400 to 1,500.

It is essential that amusements should be provided such as badminton, croquet, indoor games and also a library. These, I think, friends would gladly give.

I am aware that all which I have said is very crude, and that I have put forward only rough suggestions, but I do feel a holiday-home is a great need; therefore I put it forward in the hope that those who have been out much longer in the country, and who know the needs and the

Why is it that we see so much discontent and quarrelling amongst Indian and Eurasian nurses? I think, perhaps, the answer is this:—That outside, apart from their work, there is little or nothing in which they can interest themselves. Their day is more or less monotonous, the same round of work day after day, month after month, with perhaps two or three hours off duty daily and half a day once a month, and how do they spend those hours off duty? Very seldom, I think, in a way that is profitable either to body or mind. As a rule they sleep, or sit about talking, doing nothing in particular and so they return to their wards unrefreshed. Therefore they bring no freshness or brightness into their work, which is most essential for a nurse if she is to do her work well, namely, have a care for her patient's mind as well as body.

To prevent this it is essential our nurses should have other interests, and these must be provided for them by those responsible for their training as they themselves cannot take the initiative. At Home much has been and still is being done for the recreation of nurses in all training schools: excellent libraries, tennis and croquet grounds, and swimming baths are provided; also good pictures in the sitting rooms, and by some hospitals a cottage in the country where the tired nurse can go for a day off or a week-end and become recreated, refreshed in body, soul and spirit. If it is considered so important to provide all those things for European nurses, who are capable of obtaining recreation for themselves and can also easily do so, why is it that we do not provide it for our Indian nurses for whom it is surely just as important, or far more so? If we do not give them those things which we know to be essential for the full development of character how can we complain that they take no interest in things, that they quarrel, that they are not keen about their work or interested in their patients? Nursing is *not* easy work, it makes tremendous demands upon all the faculties, and it is necessary that means should be provided by which these faculties may be kept at their best and highest pitch for the great work of nursing.

In every hospital the nurses' home should be away from the wards, the sitting-room should contain comfortable seats, good pictures and a library from which nurses can borrow books for a certain period badminton, ping-pong and other games should be provided, and I could suggest for those who care for it, small plots of ground which they could cultivate as gardens.

In these ways the nurses are taken out of themselves, they forget for a time the wards and their work, and therefore return to them much fresher and more willingly when the time of duty comes round again. But this is not all. We come to a great need, namely, where to send a

position? Not all the training in the world will give them the character and love for their work which actuate most Christian nurses, and it has of late seemed to me a very great pity to push them on beyond the powers of the great majority, and try to force them to become the same as European nurses, an impossibility at the present stage of their evolution.

We may as well acknowledge once and for all that Indian nurses *at present* are not capable of what some of us want from them and have hoped of them. It will come if we are faithful in our day and generation, though not in our time very likely, and in the meantime it behoves us to make the best conditions we can for them until they are able to fight their own battles.

As a matter of fact, when the bye-laws were sent to me for perusal I wrote to the Secretary saying that I had understood that this point was to be referred to the Central Committee for discussion, but the papers were returned to me unaltered. If you think anything should be done in the matter there is still time for the Central Committee, of which I am a member, and as it has not yet met to consider these bye-laws, we could send them a request to specially consider the needs of our native nurses and not mete out this injustice to them. A clause could be inserted to the effect that for Indian nurses, the three years shall include midwifery *at present* and a certificate to that effect differing from the Eurasian or European full certificate should be given.

On motion, the discussion of this paper was deferred till Friday morning.

Miss Wilkinson then read a paper on recreation for Indian nurses.

RECREATION FOR INDIAN NURSES

THE importance of considering the social side of their life in training Indian girls as nurses is very great, and all who undertake this work are responsible not only for their training in the wards, in the strictly professional side of nursing, but for their social, moral and spiritual training as well. Few, if any, Indian girls take up nursing as a profession for real love of the work, for the desire to help their fellow country-women, but generally because they are obliged to earn their own living and are not considered clever or smart enough to train as teachers. So the head of the school or orphanage suggests to a girl that she should go in for nursing, certainly perhaps putting before her something of the ideal of what nursing should be, but I do not think Indian girls are taught sufficiently the great honour it is to be a nurse, to minister to others, and that in this work, perhaps more than any other, their lives most closely resemble our Saviour's.