

242 cases. During the month, 184 new cases were undertaken, and the visits paid numbered 5,027. The cases on the books at the end of the month were 211. Friends interested in the institution sent toys and picture books for the children, tea and sugar for the women, and tobacco for the men. All the patients thus received a Christmas or New Year's gift.

* * *

THE Annual Meeting with the Nurses of the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, took place last week, at which the Hon. Lord Provost BELL presided, and addressed the Nurses, as did also Mr. HUGH BROWN, the Chairman, and Professor MACEWEN. The latter, speaking of Nursing, made the following significant remarks:—

"He was glad to hear of the education of the Nurses. He had always taken an interest in Nursing. To a certain extent it was a selfish interest, because he knew that many operations could not be performed unless medical men had thoroughly good nurses to carry out their instructions. But a Nurse was an uncertain quantity. In applying for a Nurse they might get an individual who was thoroughly trained, or they might get one who was not trained at all. He thought there ought to be something done to remedy this state of matters. At the present time any one could call herself a Nurse whether she had been educated or not. There was an Institution which had for its object the Registration of Nurses. Personally he had no objection to the scheme, with this exception, that if they were going to register Nurses there should be some standard which would enable them to judge whether the applicant was a qualified Nurse. At present they placed upon the Register anybody who had been three years in a Hospital, and every hospital surgeon and physician knew that there might be a very great deal of difference in the knowledge these persons possessed. Some Hospitals did not pay much attention to the education of their Nurses, who might pass through their period of training picking up information of one kind and another. The Nurse who was moderately intelligent could educate herself; but whether she did so or not at the end of three years she got a certificate. In other Hospitals more attention was paid to the Nurses. They had certain lectures which they attended, but there was no educational test, although all who passed through the classes received a certificate. That system the Royal Infirmary wished to change, and they had put before the country a regular course of instruction, and the Nurses who passed the prescribed examination received a certificate. Many people said education would never make nurses; neither would mere education make doctors; but it was a help in that direction."

* * *

Professor MACEWEN is not quite correct in stating that the Registration Board placed upon the Register "anybody who had had three years in a Hospital," because the Board exacts a definite report from the authorities of the Training School at which the Nurse has been trained, before the name of a Nurse can be entered in the Register; yet in the main he is correct, because there is as yet no definite term of training and education in our training schools, nor any definite examination test of their knowledge before certification,

and until these great and comprehensive reforms take place, we cannot hope for any perfect scheme of registration. But that these radical reforms will be the result of the Association of Trained Nurses is now sufficiently apparent—and that within the very near future.

* * *

THERE is a marked difference between the management of Nursing matters of the Guardians of the Poor at Halifax and Skipton. At the former Institution, the following report has been prepared for presentation to the Board, giving various statistics as to the cost of the old Nursing staff, and the cost of the introduction of the new Nursing system:—

The Workhouse Hospital (now known as St. Luke's Hospital) has now a Nursing Staff consisting of one Lady Superintendent, four Charge Nurses, and thirteen Probationary Nurses. Previously the staff consisted of three or four untrained Nurses who had pauper help. The return showed that the expenditure in connection with the Nursing Staff for March 25th, 1891, to that date in 1892 (under the old system) was £179 os. 7d., and the expenditure during the following year (when the new system was introduced) was £1,502 4s. 9d. Upwards of £1,000, however, of the latter sum had been spent in making the necessary alterations of room, in purchase of furniture and property, &c. The return was supplemented by an interesting report by Dr. DOLAN, medical officer, in which he congratulated the Guardians on the humanitarian spirit which prompted them to substitute trained for unskilled Nursing. The Infirmary Committee, using a few observations on the latter report, said: It is superfluous to dwell on the superiority of skilled over unskilled Nursing, though few, we apprehend, would have been prepared to predict that the substitution of one system for the other would have resulted, as it has done, in our Infirmary, in a lessened mortality of more than 37 per cent. in twelve months' time, and this notwithstanding the fact that there has been a considerable increase in the number of inmates during that period. It is, however, obvious that the results arrived at must greatly depend upon the spirit in which the duties devolving upon the Nurses are carried out, and we are pleased to be able to corroborate the remarks of the Medical Officer upon the indirect benefits which have accrued in the improved tone manifest among the patients, and the greater tidiness, brightness, and comfort perceptible in the wards they occupy. We desire to recognise that these advantages are largely owing to the unwearied zeal and energy of Miss WILKIE and her staff, and we would at the same time acknowledge the readiness with which other officers concerned in the management of the House have adapted themselves to the altered conditions which the new system of managing the Infirmary has rendered inevitable. It has also been a source of gratification to your committee to learn from the statements of many of the patients themselves that they are not insensible to the success of the efforts made for their care and well-being.

* * *

A LOCAL contemporary reports that:—

"At the fortnightly meeting of the Skipton Board of Guardians, Father Sharp drew the attention of the Board to the necessity for additional nursing assistance in the Workhouse Hospital. On the 4th ult., the master's journal recorded the death of Christopher Walton, who was found dead in bed when the attendant took him his breakfast. The man had suffered from heart disease, and,

previous page

next page