

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK



NURSING IN BRAZIL

[MISS JANE A. JACKSON, matron of the Strangers' Hospital in Brazil, has sent us an account of her hospital with some charming photographs, which we give here in connection with her report to the International Council.]

RIO DE JANEIRO, March 26, 1901.

There is not any training-school for nursing in the whole of Brazil, but every now and then there is a great talk about one, and then it dies out again. In the native hospitals here there are not any nurses at all, the work of the wards being undertaken by Sisters of Mercy and the Order of St. Vincent de Paul, and under them in the male wards they have men who wear a linen uniform, no collar or tie, slippers without socks, and smoke cigarettes. They call them *serventes*. I believe at times they give them the title of *enfermeiros*, but as the doctor here gave us the same name with an "a" at the end, I object to calling these dirty men by it.

In the large hospital here, the Santa Casa da Misericordia, which has two thousand beds, it is the same, the sisters getting up at midnight and four A.M. to give the medicines, and the ward is then left in charge of one of these men. It is a beautiful building, but the patients and bedding are filthy. In the Hospital for the Insane, which is just below us, the work is now, on the female side, under the care of Frenchwomen who have had some little training before coming out, but they are not certificated. That now being the hospital of the state, the sisters are not employed there.

In the S. Sabastao Hospital for yellow-fever they have boys who have been trained there under the superintendent, Dr. Seidel, and two years ago I had one from him, and he is still with me. He is very clean, but I had to teach him how to sponge patients, wash them, make beds, etc. Now he is most valuable, as he knows a great deal about yellow-fever with all its sequelæ, and I can leave him alone at night with patients. He can take temperature, pulse, and respiration, and also, if the patient should have failure of the heart, which is a very common thing in yellow-fever, he knows just when to give caffeine, and I consider that a great deal in a Brazilian.

Patients are never washed, or, I might say, very rarely, in the native hospitals, and very often fresh patients are put into the beds without change of bedding.

In S. Paulo, at the Hospital Samaritano, they train probationers, but whether they give them a certificate I am not quite sure, but I have written to the medical superintendent and asked him to kindly give me all the information he can. His reply I append here:



VIEW FROM FRONT OF STRANGERS' HOSPITAL
Showing the native hospital of São João Baptista and street



VIEW FROM STRANGERS' HOSPITAL GROUNDS
Corcovado Mountain in background, rising two thousand feet above the sea



BAY OF BOTAFOGO AND ENTRANCE TO THE BAY OF RIO
The large building is the State Lunatic Asylum



SUGAR-LOAF ENTRANCE TO BAY OF RIO
Taken from in front of the Hospital

"In reply to your letter of inquiry, I can only state that as far as Sao Paulo goes there is absolutely nothing done as to organization for training of nurses. In the Samaritano all our staff nurses are home-trained, and we have only two probationers' places. We require three years of service, including medical and surgical work. If they finish the term, that is a proof that their work has been satisfactory, and a certificate to that effect is given. In the national hospitals the trained nurse is an unknown quantity. Religious Roman Catholic sisterhoods are nominally the source of supply of nurses, but what is done is done by uninstructed persons, male and female, who frequently have been patients themselves, and, showing some interest in their fellow-patients, have been asked to remain as nurses!

"The state fever hospital had three Scotch trained nurses out as an experiment, but it proved a miserable failure, and they are not likely to repeat it. So far as I know Brazil and its hospitals, you may state that, with the exception of one or two hospitals, such as the Strangers' and the Samambano, which have English trained nurses, there is no such thing known in the native hospitals as the trained nurse in our acceptance of the term. They are in this respect at least one hundred years behind the times."

Buenos Ayres is very much more progressive. The matron who was there for eleven years, Miss Eames, left last November and is now in London. I think she was from St. Thomas's Hospital. I am sure that she would be able to give you a very good idea of the work there.

The head nurses have mostly been trained at home, and yet they have selected as matron one of their probationers, with only the training possible there, which Miss Eames did not think quite sufficient.

South America has still to be roused up, for it is twenty-five years behind every other country. Every Brazilian doctor or visitor who comes up here exclaims at the cleanliness of the place and at ourselves in our white uniform, and one great compliment they pay us is that we are most punctual and better able to adapt ourselves to sick-nursing than the Brazilians.

I am only sorry that I cannot give you a better account of the condition of things in hospital work in the capital of Brazil, and you will find my letter of very little use. I wish I could say that we are going with the times. All we can do is to try and keep up to the standard as far as we can that we were taught at home, and that is difficult in a country like this, where everything is lax.

JANE A. JACKSON,

Matron and Superintendent.

NURSING IN EGYPT

CAIRO, May 24, 1901.

I.

TRAINING OF NURSES.

THE only authorized training-school for nurses in Egypt is the government hospital, Kasr el Aini, Cairo. Here the patients, mostly Egyptians, are nursed by Egyptian nurses of their own sex, under the supervision of an English staff consisting of a matron and seven sisters.

The hospital, which contains four hundred and twenty beds, is divided into two wings, one for male patients and the other for the hareem, or female patients.

On the male side the nurses are men of the lower class, sufficiently educated to be able to read and write, who work in the wards for a long or short period according to their capabilities. They receive no special training and, of course, no certificate.

L'Ecole Medicale des Filles provides the nurses for the female patients. These pupils are under the superintendence of the matron of the hospital. They are chosen from the Sanich School, a government secular institution under the care of an English head mistress, and are obliged to bring with them a certificate of proficiency in reading and writing.

The term of training is for three years. During the whole of this period the pupils work in the wards, medical, surgical, ophthalmic, midwifery, and gynæcological, under the supervision of English sisters, who train them in practical nursing. For theoretical work, during the first year, lectures are given by the physiologist (a native) to the Medical School on elementary physiology and anatomy, and by the matron on nursing. At the end of this term an examination is held on these subjects.

During the second year the principal subjects taught are pharmacology by the professor of chemistry (a German), and theoretical nursing by the matron. The pupils are examined in these subjects at the end of twelve months.

For the third year the lectures are on midwifery, normal and abnormal labors, which are given by a native doctor, on anatomy of the pelvis and gynæcology by another native doctor, and on legal medicine by the director of the Medical Schools.

The practical training in the wards in midwifery is given by the surgeons attending the cases. There is no English midwife in the hospital, and the pupils receive no special training in obstetrical nursing. The pupils have lessons in English and are instructed in physical exercises.

At the end of her three years, if a pupil passes her final examination and her conduct has been satisfactory, she receives a diploma from the Sanitary Department and is registered by the state as a hakeema. A hakeema has the following choice of work: She may practise as a midwife on her own account, or she may remain in the government employment in either of the following capacities: She may stay on in the hospital as a sort of staff nurse; there are two of these posts at Kasr el Aini. She may be attached to one of the police divisions of Cairo or Alexandria, or she may go to a moodarieh (province), working with the doctor attached to the police station or province. Under these conditions a hakeema may legally certify cause of death, write a simple prescription, attend cases of normal labor, treat gynæcological patients, and in case of an outbreak of an epidemic inspect females. A few Mohammedan families who object to a male doctor employ a certificated hakeema for sick female relatives.

In addition to and quite distinct from the hakeemas are the "diah's." These are completely uneducated women, who receive theoretical instruction by a course of lectures on simple midwifery given by a doctor or midwife at Kasr el Aini or other government hospitals. The course of lectures usually occupies about fifteen days. At the end of this time they are examined by a doctor, and if passed by him are licensed by the state to attend cases of the simplest kind. The law is very strict with regard to the limitations of the "diah's" work. She may use no instrument of any kind, not even for rupturing the membranes.

The cases of normal labor at Kasr el Aini Hospital are very few indeed, and are chiefly women undergoing a term of imprisonment at one of the state prisons. The abnormal cases are usually very difficult ones, as the patient has

probably been attended in her own home by a "diah," who has not recognized the difficulty of the case until the patient has been several days in labor and is in danger of death.

There is very little demand for Egyptian women as nurses among Egyptians.

The hakeema as a midwife has a recognized position, and so has the "diah." The great majority of women in Egypt are still veiled, and they have no authority in any household but their own. They are, therefore, simply useless as nurses. The German hospitals, of which there are two in Egypt, one in Cairo and one in Alexandria, are nursed by German deaconesses trained at Kaiserswerth. The French hospitals, three in number, one at Cairo, one at Suez, and one at Alexandria, are nursed by the sisters of St. Vincent de Paul.

The British hospital at Port Said has an English superintendent, who has four fully trained nurses under her, three for the hospital and one for private cases. They are all engaged from England for three years.

The government hospital at Port Said is nursed by sisters of the Bon Pasteur order.

The Greek hospital in Alexandria also employs English sisters.

II.

ORGANIZATIONS OF CERTIFICATED NURSES.

Of these there are three in Cairo:

The English hospital and Victoria Nursing Home, the staff of which consists of a matron and seven nurses, all English. The nurses are employed in the hospital and for outside work.

The English Nursing Home, which has a superintendent and four nurses.

The Marianne Hughes Nursing Fund, which employs two nurses. The nurses employed by it are engaged by the matron of Kasr el Aini Hospital and are under her supervision. They nurse for any doctor in Cairo, and may be sent to other parts of Egypt by special permission from the committee of the fund. They are engaged for six or eighteen months, and when not nursing private patients they are employed in the government hospital.

In Alexandria the Victoria Home, which is a home for governesses and a registry office for servants, keeps three nurses, whom it sends out to cases as they are required.

J. G. WATKINS.

LETTERS

FROM NEW ZEALAND

THE following most interesting letter has just been received from Mrs. O'Neill, who is a nurse, councillor of the International Council of Nurses, and inspector of hospitals in New Zealand:

"HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS DEPARTMENT,

"WELLINGTON, N. Z., August 14, 1901.

"MY DEAR MISS DOCK: I am sending you our annual Hospitals and Asylums Department reports, also a copy of the New Zealand bill for the registra-