

obstetric nursing, and mental nursing, are still largely in the hands of those who have only had experience, and very often most inadequate experience, in these special branches. In the latter case it is encouraging to notice in the advertisements for Matrons of Lunatic Asylums, which are, after all, nothing more or less than mental hospitals, that general training is required of candidates. Obstetric nursing is still in a very unsatisfactory condition, and this for a twofold reason. Firstly, the Obstetrical Society of London, a body of medical men who have constituted themselves the judges of the required standard of training, and the examiners of candidates for their certificate, have so little grasped the requirements of modern nursing, or the fundamental idea which they insist upon in their own profession that a general training must precede all special training, that they scatter their certificates broadcast amongst persons who have had three months' work, or maybe less, in a maternity hospital, and who pass their examination! Another potent influence, causing the specialist obstetric nurse to flourish, is that, so far, the Matrons of our Training Schools have not, with a few exceptions, seen the desirability for securing this education for their pupils, the reason, no doubt, being that, as a rule, it was not included in their own curriculum of training, and so they fail to grasp the necessity for it.

Some attempts have been made, both in this country, in the United States, and in Canada, to inaugurate a system of visiting nursing by which, on payment of small sums, patients in moderate circumstances can receive daily visits from trained nurses. It is hoped that in this way the needs of those who are unable to afford the luxury of a private nurse may be met; but this branch of nursing must still be considered in its experimental stage.

#### EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

While much has been done in our hospitals in the last quarter of a century to increase the personal comfort of the nurses, and to shorten their hours on duty, it is curious how little real advance has been made in this country in their educational curriculum. The London Hospital, the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, and the Dublin Metropolitan Technical School, have instituted Preliminary Training Schools with very satisfactory results; but, so far, we have no public preliminary training colleges and no post-graduate courses of instruction by means of which isolated nurses can keep themselves in touch with modern methods, nor have we any training college for those who, in their undergraduate days, have shown promise of possessing teaching capacity, and who should, therefore, have the opportunity of instruction in the best methods of

imparting knowledge before they are, as Superintendents of Nurse Training Schools, entrusted with the education of others. It is a well recognised fact that the ability to perform any given work by no means carries with it the power to impart the requisite knowledge to others; yet, at present, any certificated nurse is considered capable of superintending, and consequently of teaching, others. It is small wonder that the quality of our nursing education suffers. In the United States, where great strides have of late years been made in nursing education, the first public attempt to place nursing on an educational plane, was the appointment of Miss Hanna Kindbom to a Chair of Clinical Nursing in the University of Texas, and in 1899 an enormous step forward was made by the establishment of a course of instruction at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, for graduate nurses, endorsed by their Matrons, who aspire to become Superintendents. The uniformity of nursing education in the various training schools must be largely affected in the future by the College, while the increased efficiency of the teachers there educated cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the taught.

#### NURSING ORGANIZATION.

As an inevitable consequence of the rise and progress of the calling of nursing, came the need for organization. To the credit of Great Britain it must be noted that it was the first country to attempt this Herculean task. In 1887 a few Matrons met together and founded the British Nurses' Association for the purpose of obtaining State Registration of Nurses. The valuable work done by this Association in its early years is well known, and the result of this was that in 1893 a Royal Charter was granted to the members. Unfortunately, the success of the Association proved its undoing, for after the Charter was granted many who had held aloof in the early days, became members. Medical men, moreover, who were generously admitted to membership, became uneasy at the evident ability of nurses to manage their own affairs, and some of the "baser sort," who used the Nurses' Association as a stepping-stone to Royal favour and social notoriety, to which their status in their own profession had never admitted them, became alarmed at its increasing prosperity, and took counsel together as to the best means of depriving the nurses of power in their own Association, and succeeded for a time in accomplishing their discreditable purpose. The passing of the new Bye Laws in 1897 made it impossible for self-respecting nurses to take any further part in the management of the Association, and many of the early members resigned their membership. Since

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