

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,066.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1908.

Vol. XLI

Editorial.

THE SELECTION OF PROBATIONERS.

The selection of probationers is by no means an easy matter, and the Matron who wishes to obtain the best candidates from the "material" which offers itself for her inspection has many points to take into consideration.

In the first place there is, or course, physique. Ultimately, candidates provisionally approved will have to be pronounced fit by a medical practitioner, but the Matron weeds out in the first instance those whose physical incapacity is obvious.

Then there is the question of general education, and it is a still somewhat debated point how high a standard should be required of probationers, but the Matron is wise who keeps in view the duties which these probationers may be called upon to perform, both in the course of their training and when, as certificated nurses, they take their place in the ranks of skilled nurses.

It will generally be conceded that a high degree of intelligence is necessary if the nurse of the present day is to carry out efficiently the many responsible duties entrusted to her. On her deftness, skill in manipulation, thoroughness, and entire conscientiousness, the patient is dependent not only for comfort but for personal safety, for lack of any or all of these qualities may spoil the most skilful work of the cleverest physicians and surgeons. Again, many nurses at the conclusion of their training now take up work abroad, through the Colonial Nursing Association, Lady Minto's Indian Nursing Association and other Societies, and for such posts the certificate of the Central Midwives' Board is almost invariably required. Miss Amy Hughes

has recently declared that a knowledge of massage is almost indispensable to the present day nurse, and in order to obtain certificates in these subjects, examinations must be passed.

Then, not only must the certificated nurses be thoroughly equipped from a practical standard, but, if she eventually joins the Military Nursing Service, she must satisfy the Nursing Board that "as regards education, character and social status, she is a fit person" to be admitted to the Service.

If she elects to work as a Queen's Nurse, she must, if promoted to the position of County Superintendent, possess or acquire the gift of public speaking, for part of her duty will consist in explaining to meetings in various parts of the country, the objects of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, and in endeavouring to secure the extension of its work in the County in which she resides.

Added to this, recent years have shown unmistakably that trained nurses must be prepared to take their share of public work in order to defend the interests and uphold the honour of the profession to which they belong.

For all these reasons it will be seen that in the selection of probationers versatility must be taken into consideration, for the fully trained nurse must combine strength and sweetness, courage and conciliation, and many other qualities which are not universally found blended in equal proportions in the same individual.

The aim of a Matron in selecting probationers will also be to discover vocations, that is to say, qualities latent in the candidate which, when developed by training and discipline, will result in production of a really good nurse.

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