

philosophy that the curiosity associated with research can be an integral part of all education.

Research is the newer approach of Nursing Education. Its objectives include the exploring of mistakes made, the needs of the present and future of both patient and nurse in all branches of the society. Hypothesis and proof have for long been accepted as important concomitants of scientific research: Modern Nursing, as a young profession, has great opportunities ahead in which both its creative minorities and its rank and file can actively participate to find the means of welding nursing education and patient care into one indivisible whole, so that the world will recognise and be adequately supplied with Nursing which IS education.

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Mental Nursing in U.S.A.

By L. Goddard, S.R.N.

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA mental nursing has advanced considerably since the time that a frail little woman called Dorothea Lynde Dix gave to America the first and real impetus to the mental hospital movement. She did what Florence Nightingale did for the hospitals in England, and hospitals for the mental sick were provided which separated them from the public view and gave them the necessary attention and care.

In 1844 the first known organisation was formed and called the Association of Medical Superintendents, but it is now known under the title of American Psychiatric Association. The actual principles of its working order appear to be based on the English common law under government control.

About 95 per cent. of the mental patients in America come under the jurisdiction of several states, and there are five different types of administration.

1. Supervision of all state and charitable institutions by a paid control board.
2. No central control body. Supervision of each hospital by local boards of trustees.
3. Supervision of all state and charitable institutions by an unpaid board of citizens.
4. Organisation under a department of mental health with a full time employed commissioner, who has epileptic colonies and schools for the feebleminded.
5. All institutions organised under a department of welfare with a division for each special group.

There is a commission in lunacy, which consists of three persons, one of the three being a qualified psychiatrist, one an attorney, and one a disinterested person.

The number of patients to one trained nurse in mental hospitals was 6,389 in the year 1900, but was reduced in 1930 to 416 patients, and one physician to 277-9.

Although there is much opposition in America to the use of private homes or private hospitals for mental patients, there is a far better trained personnel to the number of patients, there being two or three patients to one trained nurse, and the status of the patient remains the same in relationship to the family physician, so that the number of patients to physician and nurse is therefore small enough to ensure personal attention.

The rates for patients in private mental hospitals is from 50 dollars to 100 dollars a week, special nurses and the nurses' board being additional.

Private patients' legal status in society is not changed in America, as in England, psychiatric experience has shown that mental cases do much better in hospitals than in their own homes, and every effort is made to have them removed from relatives who are usually too distressed to think wisely, and the patient unable to think for himself. The decision lies with the doctor.

The famous Gheel Colony method of boarding out mental patients in the community to work, was copied with some slight alterations by the Massachusetts legislature. It took many years of discussion before the act was passed, but this eventually came to pass. The patients had to be received into a mental hospital first before they could be boarded out.

Schizophrenia, which is now considered the most serious of the major psychoses, fills one-fifth of all hospital beds in the United States, and the Metrazal and Insulin shock treatment given found marked beneficial effects.

Hydrotherapy treatment is used in most of the hospitals, which are equipped for Scotch douche, continuous tubs, cabinet baths and colonic irrigations. Buildings are set apart for the shock treatment.

Recreation, occupational, carpentry, gardening and outdoor sports are encouraged. Most of the neurological clinics are now equipped with electroencephalographs, whilst in England only about six are so equipped, as they involve a large expense.

It was in 1929 that Hans Berger reported the discovery of rhythmical electric waves from the head. It was later shown by Professor Adrian at Cambridge, England, that waves arose from the occipital lobes of the brain, which, by the aid of the E.E.G. give valuable diagnostic aid in some cases of neurosis, epilepsy and head injuries, by causing abnormal waves to occur.

And later, in 1936, Mr. Grey Walters first demonstrated, while working at the Maida Vale hospital for Nervous Diseases that cerebral tumours could be accurately localised by the use of the E.E.G.

In 1938 the Association of Former Patients of the Psychiatric Institute, University of Illinois, formed a gathering of 100 patients who were discharged cured, following shock treatment, its principal object being to combat any stigma attached to mental health. They related their experiences for the benefit of others and by doing so, reached homes which were widely scattered, and also helped to educate the population to the necessity for early treatment.

The social status of the nurse in many mental hospitals in the United States of America has been slightly lower than that of clerks and office assistants and the use of the word "nurse" is quite a recent and progressive move. Previously, they were known as attendants but despite this, some nurses that have graduated are turning with interest to psychiatric nursing.

The personality of the nurse, her capability of understanding and her easy acceptance of conditions and requirements, as well as the importance of becoming a confidential friend and wise counsellor to her patients, are recognised attributes there, as much as in England.

The educational qualifications outlined by the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers are an A.B. degree or its equivalent, and graduates taking a course of psychiatric social work must work for not less than nine months' duration, and are eligible after they have held

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)