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Editorial.

The Fevers in a Changing World.

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SINCE THE INTRODUCTION of chemotherapy the Infectious Fevers—their prevention and management—have undergone spectacular change. No longer is it necessary for doctor and nurse to stand helplessly by while the insidious effects of virulent organisms permeate the body bringing advanced toxæmia, complications and death. Prophylactic treatment has considerably reduced the instance of many of these diseases and Penicillin, Sulpha, etc., have almost eliminated the danger of complications.

With this changing picture it is not surprising if there is found to be an increasing acceptance of the assumption that the Fevers are no longer of the same significance in the teaching syllabus of the student nurse.

It is as well, however, to consider other changes operating in the world around us. It has been said that the advances of science are bringing us closer together: certainly distance is no barrier either to locomotion or to communication. Puck, who undertook to "Put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes" (Midsummer Night's Dream) might be surprised were he with us today, at the way things have "speeded up." Air travel and radar now outstrip those minutes in comparable seconds.

While oceans, mountain ranges, deserts and jungles were barriers against our getting to know each other, there was every excuse for us not understanding each other and the conditions in which we flourished or decayed. Today it is more difficult *not* to possess this awareness, for every method of communication—news-paper, radio, films, letters and dispatches, are constantly bringing us information from our now near neighbours, even if these neighbours do live on the opposite side of the globe. No longer can there be found any real excuse for not knowing the customs, social and economic conditions, laws and standards of living of people other than ourselves.

Then to travel is *la mode* and this movement of persons and peoples is another important feature of our changing world.

Because of this rapid transit the health and living conditions of other people now become significant knowledge and closely related to our own circumstances. Changes in the status of the people of Porto Rico—they are now American citizens—is bringing large numbers of these people to the great American cities without the control of immigration laws. Many come to overcrowded conditions so forming new slums, not only

bringing in new cases of Tuberculosis and other transmissible diseases, but at the same time, by this resultant overcrowding, increasing the instance of those seasonable diseases, Whooping Cough, Measles, etc., which are still with us at certain times of the year. Again, Yellow Fever, once an unknown disease in Southern Rhodesia, in spite of the relevant mosquito being an inhabitant of the country, is now a constant threat from infected territory only a few hours air travel away.

The importance of these changes to the nurse and to nursing cannot be overestimated. Nursing, as a universal and as a major discipline, must fail lamentably if it does not concern itself with this modern welding together of peoples and repattern its internal structure to meet these modern trends. Few would dispute the importance of the nurse's place in the world today as a Health Educator. With medical science bringing the era of preventive medicine ever more rapidly nearer, nursing and nurses must of necessity remodel, extend and apply their special knowledge and skills in a never-ending effort to meet adequately the calls that both sick and healthy increasingly demand and expect of them.

The local scene is no longer enough upon which to pattern the modern nurse's knowledge. The world is now her oyster. The under-privileged disease-ridden country must take equal precedence in her learning process with the under-privileged village and slum. Conditions of over-crowding, poor sanitation, inadequate feeding as factors producing disease, need now to be closely correlated and recognised as significant factors in relation to world health. Health authorities are requiring as never before, an increasing number of nurses to assist in guiding, nursing and supervising in new centres throughout the length and breadth of the world and these must function within and without the hospital—there can be no partitioning now of these areas of nursing practice. The knowledge and skills of these nurses need to be built on a new foundation and it cannot be too carefully asked of what shall this new foundation consist.

It is at this point that the significance of microbiology, epidemiology, sanitary science together with the management and prevention of the Infectious Fevers can be recognised in their true perspective: for if we look carefully at the conditions in the world today as background for the education of the nurse, it is apparent, that taking into full consideration these changes and conditions, these special aspects of medical science and nursing as directly related to the Fevers are of greater significance than they have ever been before in the history of Man.

In the more advanced countries, the reduction of the instance of the common fevers has been largely brought about by better living conditions, education of the population and improved dietary and sanitary customs

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