

Among the Committee's general comments may be cited:—

On nurse recruitment: ". . . we wonder whether the potential nurse fully appreciates the many spheres of nursing, including nurse teaching, that are open to her. We consider it important, therefore, that it be made clear to parents and to headmistresses and their senior pupils that the scope of the nursing profession is broad and comprehensive. As an essential basic consideration the idea of nursing the patient must appeal to the girl choosing this profession, but there is ample room for those who are also interested in teaching and administration or in the wide field of public health."

"If the nursing profession is to attract girls of the right character, it is essential that the education authorities, as well as the health authorities, should recognise the nurse tutor as an expert educationist."

The Committee considered it most important that a nurse tutor's time should not be wasted in trying to teach student nurses who were unlikely to reach the required educational standard. Such candidates should, in their view, if otherwise suitable, be given an early chance of entering assistant nurse training schools. As the training of assistant nurses was basically practical it could be undertaken by ward sisters. By this means a reduction in the wastage of nurses might well result, since many good practical nurses were lost to nursing by being unable to maintain the theoretical standard expected of students in training for registration.

#### Report sent to Hospital Authorities

Copies of the report have been sent by the Health Departments to all hospital authorities commending it to their attention, while the General Nursing Councils, for their part, have sent copies to the Area Nurse-Training Committees.

In a covering circular to the English hospital authorities, the Ministry of Health states that the number of separate nurse training schools is undoubtedly much greater than is necessary for the training of an adequate number of nurses, and many of them are far too small to be economic in operation or to provide a really satisfactory course of training. "This state of affairs," the circular adds, "is largely due to the desire of hospitals of all types and sizes to obtain approval as training schools in order that they may offer more attractive conditions of employment to trained nurses and obtain the services of student nurses for the routine nursing work." Under the Health Service there had been an increasing tendency to amalgamate existing training schools into larger groups but the process could, with advantage, be greatly accelerated. The Committee's recommendations on this point "accordingly merit very serious consideration." Referring to the proposed new type of post with the title of "Director of the Nurse Education Department," the circular states that the rate of remuneration for such posts will be considered in due course by the Nurses and Midwives Whitley Council. Meanwhile hospital authorities proposing to establish such a post should first consult the Department.

#### Selection of Student Nurses

The importance of the careful selection of student nurses cannot be over-emphasised, is another of the points made in the circular. Training hospitals which, for one reason or another, are unable to obtain student nurses of the requisite quality should seriously consider relinquishing their status as independent training schools for the register, and either seek to become part of a group training school on the lines recommended in the report, or establish a training school for the roll of assistant nurses, of whom many more are needed.

A CONGRESS, WHICH IS being sponsored by the Royal College of Midwives, will open at Bedford College, London, on September 4th for one week, and will be one of the greatest events in the International History of Midwifery. Seven hundred delegates and observers will attend from 50 different countries.

## Book Reviews.

### The Story of Nursing\*

By J. M. Calder, S.R.N.

"THE STORY OF NURSING," giving an outline of the evolution of nursing as it is known from its earliest conception to our modern times of many and various specialised branches demanding skilled nurses with its some 60 line illustrations, is an attractive publication.

It is, however, surprising to find that the author, who depicts so faithfully the outstanding personalities and heroines of early history *does not complete the story of nursing* concerning the "outstanding historical event of our time—the passing of the Nurses Registration Act, 1919."

The writer does not even mention in her story the pioneer of State Registration of Nurses—Ethel Gordon Fenwick, who fought for 30 years the battle of the movement!!! and won, despite the almost insuperable opposition. The story says:—

"In only one respect may Florence Nightingale be said to have been in any sense lacking in foresight, she failed to recognise any advantage in the State Registration of Nurses, and thus delayed the reform for many years. She held that the training and education of a nurse was made up of two aspects of equal importance: first, the acquisition of knowledge which was properly tested by the passing of an examination; second, the development of character which could not be tested by passing an examination. No doubt she was right in assuming that nursing in the year 1886, when the State Registration of Nurses was first mooted, was too young, too unorganised and contained divergencies too great for a single standard to be applied. Be that as it may, the State Registration of Nurses in Great Britain did not become law until the Nurses Registration Act of 1919."

To the story could be added the significant fact that the majority of the Hospital Governors and their Matrons were formidable opponents for very different reasons from that of the Lady of the Lamp.

This otherwise attractive work loses much of interest but, in omitting throughout its pages on this "outstanding historical event," any recognition of that great woman, Ethel Gordon Fenwick's legal skill, all her genius with which she was so richly endowed and which she so generously spent in her labours throughout the 40 years' struggle in the nurses' cause, the disregarding the life's work of the pioneer, leaves "The Story of Nursing" sadly incomplete.

As the above publication brings to the surface the facts concerning the struggle for the State Registration of Nurses, the first setback experienced, here set out, will be of interest to those interested in Nursing History.

A. S. B.

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#### The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

A Special General Meeting of the above Society was held on Saturday, January 23rd, 1904, at the Rooms of the Medical Society of London, Miss Isla Stewart presided.

The meeting was called "to receive and consider Amendments suggested to the Draft Bill for the State Registration of Nurses."

Miss Stewart said that in accordance with the resolution passed at the annual meeting the Draft Bill, after having been accepted in principle at a Special General Meeting of members held on November 28th, had been widely circulated to Hospital Boards of Management with Training-Schools attached, to Medical Bodies, Nursing Corporations, Nurses' Societies, Women's Societies, Members of Parliament, and

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