

must be found in the qualification of the woman to hold the position of superintendent? This standard once established we could all meet on an equal footing as active members of our association, equally interested in all that pertains to the best interests of our common work, no matter what position we may hold.

But apart from any question relating to our association there are other and, perhaps, stronger reasons why there should be special qualifications required of a woman who would assume so responsible a position as that of a superintendent and teacher in the profession of nursing. Many of us here to-day are the product of the pioneer schools—graduates of years ago—when there was more scrubbing required of the pupil-nurse, and when less systematic teaching in the theory and practice of nursing was obtainable than is the case to-day. The graduates of these original schools were bound to be the superintendents of all the many other schools that so rapidly sprang into existence, so that we find the pupils of yesterday not infrequently the superintendents of to-day, although, unlike Minerva, they did not spring full-grown, armed at every point, ready to do battle in their new work. On the contrary, our experience has been won by hard and persistent work—just how hard is only known to each of us—and the advancements we have made, the improvements we have helped to bring about for the schools of the present day, are the result, not so much of what we were taught, as of what we were *not* taught. Nor need it necessarily reflect upon us to concede that while we were reaching the present measure of our knowledge, our lack of experience was having its daily effect upon those about us, upon the pupils we were instructing, the hospitals we were caring for, and even upon the patients. And this still holds true to a certain extent with every graduate nurse who becomes a superintendent, for as yet there are no special advantages offered to a woman who is desirous of fitting herself to become a superintendent of a training school for nurses. Her principal opportunity is through the experience she gains as a head nurse, and in a few instances from such extra training as she has received while acting as an assistant superintendent.

We all recognize that the position of superintendent of nurses requires a woman of executive ability, education, tact, refinement and keen perceptions, and that in addition to these she should have had a thorough all-round training in every practical detail of nursing, as well as a thorough course in the theory of her work. But a woman may have all this and still be at a disadvantage when she undertakes her first school, for the simple reason that she does not necessarily know the best methods of presenting to others or of teaching her subjects. A sound personal knowledge is a good foundation, but it is quite another matter to be able to impart that knowledge in such a way that

it is presented in the best form to the pupil. It is generally conceded by instructors in other kinds of schools that, in addition to the diploma secured, it is necessary for those who intend to teach to have a further course in a school of pedagogy or in a normal school, where they may supplement the knowledge they have acquired by learning the principles and the best methods of teaching and how to apply them. Why should not this hold equally well with a woman who elects to become a teacher in a school for nurses? It is one thing to graduate as a trained nurse, but quite another thing to enter upon the duties and responsibilities of a training school without a thorough and proper grounding in the management of such work. The woman who lacks this part of her education is placed at a disadvantage from which she cannot recover for some little time.

There are already training schools for teachers established in this country, notably one just recently affiliated with Columbia University, New York. Why should not we take advantage of them? For undoubtedly courses could be arranged by which the special requirements of our teachers could be met. The practical requirements we should of course continue to take care of ourselves, but in the theory and didactic part these training schools could supply much which cannot be easily acquired elsewhere.

One of the individual and collective objects of this society is to leave the work of nursing in a better condition than we found it, and I think that we may congratulate ourselves upon some of our results. We have thus far worked to some purpose, and our time, energy and money have not been expended in vain.

Until this year our attention has been chiefly devoted to the interests of the nurses and the work in general, but as at this meeting the subject of "The Superintendent of the Training School" is to be under discussion, why should we not go a step further and discuss the actual making of the superintendent, *i.e.*, both educational and practical, and her special qualifications? The society is strong enough and representative enough to initiate the establishment of a Central Board of Examiners, whose duty it would be to map out a schedule of requirements for trained nurses who wish to become superintendents of training schools. Besides passing a satisfactory examination in subjects decided upon by this board, it should be required that a certain length of time should have been spent in some specified training school for teachers, for instruction in the theory of teaching before the successful candidate is entitled to receive a special certificate declaring her fitness to take the position of a superintendent of nurses. It should be the privilege of any graduate nurse, whether from a large or small school, to come up for these examinations, provided she be properly endorsed by her school, and in some instances where a

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