

organization of the Army Medical and Nursing Services. In their Report the Committee embodied the essential principle for which we have long pleaded, and which the Matrons' Council emphasized in the memorandum which it presented to the Secretary of State for War, that a Nursing Department should be formed in connection with the War Office which should be under the control of an administrative nursing officer. They also defined the constitution of a Nursing Board for the control of this Nursing Department consisting of ten persons representing the various interests concerned, the nursing profession being accorded four seats to be filled by three Matrons of large civil hospitals with medical schools, and the Matron-in-Chief of the new Imperial Military Nursing Service. Thus it will be seen for the first time in the annals of our history a public department has recognized that for the effective organization of a nursing service the advice and co-operation of nursing experts must be secured, if successful administration is to be attained. It is not unreasonable to hope the Admiralty and the Local Government Board may follow the example set by the War Office, and re-organize the nursing departments under their control on a modern basis. In the case of the Local Government Board, indeed, this is an urgent necessity, as under the conditions which at present prevail many better class nurses will not take service under the Board, and the *impasse* is likely to become more acute until the system of government is entirely re-organized.

Looking back over the year as a whole, we feel that there is much ground for encouragement, and for hope for the future. In New Zealand a Bill has been passed giving to the nurses of that Colony legal Status; in the United States the nurses in four States are already organizing to obtain State Registration, and when the American woman takes a thing in hand she is not usually long in securing what she desires; and there is no doubt that in this country not only trained nurses, but medical men also are beginning to realize that the right solution of the midwife difficulty is the abolition of the specialist and the registration of thoroughly trained nurses qualified in medical, surgical, and obstetrical nursing who will work not as independent practitioners but under medical direction. Thus our scattered forces will be brought into line.

The International Council of Nurses.

REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES ON NURSING IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.*

SEPTEMBER, 1901.

Prepared by MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, *President.*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCIENCE OF NURSING.

From the earliest ages of which we have any historical record the sick have been tended, and the art of healing has been practised, but the development of Nursing on scientific principles has only been attempted during the last half-century.

In the evolution of our profession we note three stages.

1. The period of untrained aid—developing in many instances by constant practice into a considerable amount of skill.

2. The time when, in order to qualify as a trained nurse a woman was required to undergo a short period of hospital training, varying in length from three months to a year.

At this stage a general willingness to obey orders, without any knowledge of the reasons for the duties required, was considered adequate.

3. The higher standard of skill which is required at the present time, and which is attainable only by prolonged practical work, combined with an intelligent comprehension of underlying principles.

Thus nursing has developed on the same lines as those adopted by the science of medicine, and can only hope to make true progress along the same lines as this associated profession, by procuring adequate educational privileges and powers of self-government.

THE CURRICULUM OF TRAINING.

In the principal general hospitals, with a few notable exceptions, three years' training in the wards of the institution is now required. Here any semblance of uniformity ceases. Some require preliminary evidence of general knowledge. Some give a certificate at the end of the course only after the pupils have passed a satisfactory examination, others do not impose this test. Yet other hospitals withhold the certificate until the nurse severs her connection with the institution. In some few hospitals, notably at St. Bartholomew's, the Royal Free Hospital, St. George's, and

* Presented to the Meeting of the International Council of Nurses at Buffalo, U.S.A., September 16th, 1901.

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