

of the school are always welcome, and we were one of a number of guests upon this occasion. The subject of the lecture was on "Civics," school suffrage, tenement-house problems, and allied subjects being the speaker's themes. Mrs. Mead is one of Boston's noted women lecturers, and her address would have been most entertaining if she had not gone out of her way to tell one of those objectionable stories that the lay public seem to think it always their duty to tell to nurses, with absolute disregard of all courtesy.

Mrs. Mead spent some moments before entering upon the subject of her discourse in warning nurses against the prevailing tendency to become hardened, to have their sympathies blunted, and to lose all reverence and delicacy, through familiarity with suffering. She spoke with authority, because she had once known a young girl before she entered a training-school, who was a lady of most delicate sensibilities, sympathetic, warm-hearted, and considerate, who, upon her first visit home after a very few months in the hospital shocked her friends by the irreverent manner in which she spoke of the dead as "stiffs."

We do not question the truth of Mrs. Mead's statement, but we claim that such a story, told to a large audience of nurses, made up of pupils, graduates, and officers of hospitals and training-schools, was out of place, and most discourteous. In our quarter of a century of close association with nurses we have never met such a woman. She would not be permitted to remain in any reputable school a single hour. We think it is time for the public to drop the idea that the professional nurse of to-day still belongs to the criminal and ignorant classes. Our faults may be many, but we have yet to find a perfect woman in any class of society, and we feel quite sure that Mrs. Mead would not presume to speak with such frankness before an audience of society women, as common, every-day good manners would make such plain speaking impossible. We certainly have a right to the same amount of courtesy that is accorded other women.

We shall postpone mention of a very charming visit to Baltimore and the Johns Hopkins until we are able to give Miss Nutting's paper on preliminary training.

One of the most delightful experiences that we have enjoyed for many years was a prolonged visit with Miss Dolliver at the Massachusetts General Hospital, when we were allowed to come and go, work or be sociable, just as circumstances and our inclination dictated.

The spirit of improvement has struck the dear old place, and new buildings with wonderful proportions are still being added in many directions, threatening to overshadow the graceful old granite structure with its classic lines.

To be present at our own Alumnae Association meeting, and to speak to its members, old and new, on the subject so dear to our heart, "registration," was another great pleasure, and to be made to feel that, although so many years absent, our place was still there touched our heart deeply.

In fact, wherever we have been, even where the faces were all strange, the cordiality with which the editor of the *Journal* was received and appropriated was one of those gratifying experiences which words cannot express. The little journey of ten weeks was just a succession of pleasant episodes, the memory of which will always remain with us.

#### NURSING INSTITUTES.

The endowment of Simmons College as a technical school for women promises to open the way for a central nursing institute for Boston, where the pupils of all schools within the radius may receive the theoretical and preliminary instruction necessary before entering the wards of the hospitals for the practical part of their nursing education.

The idea that a nurse shall be taught the theory of her work before entering the wards is no longer new, but to separate the theory from the practice means a complete revolution in the present methods of training-school administration.

Mention was made in the first number of this *Journal* (October, 1901), of a plan which Miss M. E. P. Davis was trying to work out in Boston for a central preliminary school for nurses. The financial difficulties attendant upon her scheme prevented its development, but her agitation of the subject undoubtedly prepared the way for the plan which may be worked out in connection with Simmons College.

On March 12th, a public announcement was made of the aims of the college, which included domestic science in all its branches, secretarial work, library technique, horticultural and landscape gardening, and a general scientific course, "to be of special value to teachers or to those wishing to prepare themselves for medicine or nursing." Immediately, Miss Davis and Miss Palmer, who was at that time staying in Boston, invited eight of the leading superintendents in that locality to a luncheon at the Hotel Thorndike, where the subject was discussed of asking the trustees of Simmons College to establish the much-talked-of preliminary course upon such lines as the superintendents and hospital managers should advise.

The guests present were Misses Drown, Riddle, Dolliver, McDowell, Jamme, Hutchinson, and Stevenson, Miss Richards not being able to attend. These ladies formed themselves into a committee and selected Miss Dolliver as their representative

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)