

profession is in their different educational requirements. A true profession requires a liberal education, and also affords opportunities for gaining it. Can nursing stand this final test?

It is easy enough to criticise the training-schools of the present. None of them require anything like the preliminary education that is required by other professional schools. And yet it is only within most recent years that more was required by the medical or legal or theological schools. So it would be most unfair to deny true professional status to nursing on this count. That the new profession in its evolution is behind other time-honoured professions is no wonder. But its rate of progress is, nevertheless, wonderful.

We must, however, admit that in training-schools for nurses there is still woful lack of uniformity in the curriculums offered and, consequently, in the requirements for diplomas. For the nursing profession there are as yet no government requirements, such as always have safeguarded the legal and latterly have been enacted to safeguard the medical profession. But strong movements are now tending towards such provision in many of the States. And as the nursing associations gain strength, nurses will undoubtedly succeed in bringing the training-schools up to a decent standard. Till then we must admit that nursing is being defrauded of its proper status by the schools that send out their incompletely educated graduates. But here again account must be taken of the prevalent custom of nurses who have had only partial training to take post-graduate instruction in the departments of nursing in which they are ignorant. And further improvement in this same direction is also apparent in the combining of different courses of training, a movement that has already gained considerable headway.

The chief criticism deserved by the training-schools is that they are not primarily and distinctly educational in their purposes and methods. On the one hand, the training-schools of the large hospitals do not give a general training. Some do not include contagious service, some have no midwifery service, while others have only female patients, and almost none pay any attention to the equally important departments of private family nursing and visiting nursing. Indeed, some of the hospitals for special diseases maintain what they call training-schools and graduate their nurses, who, of course, have had no general training, as nurse specialists. This is entirely indefensible. For, while it is quite right for a nurse to devote herself to a specialty, just as it is for a physician to do so, it is similarly not a professional procedure unless she has first had a general training.

On the other hand, in many of the training-schools of the small hospitals which afford more general training the nurses are employed for a part of their studentship as money-earners for support-

ing the hospitals. It would be hard to say which schools are the worst. Both kinds fail to appreciate the high importance of educational ideals. No truly educational institution can ever be subordinate to utilitarian purposes. What sort of a medical school could be run by a hospital for the hospital's benefit? It is precisely the same with schools for nursing. If either institution might properly include the other, surely the educational should include the eleemosynary, as is the custom in the deaconess schools for nurses abroad. In this country the cart is ahead of the horse.

But in spite of these grave defects of the training schools, which admittedly hinder the advance of nursing, even the educational opportunities now offered to student nurses are still not so insufficient as to debar modern nursing from full professional standing. For in nursing it is not the science upon which the art depends, but rather the art itself, that is of most importance. And, as in every other art, so in that of nursing, the art can be learned by the student nurses only in personal imitation of those who possess the art. Until recently it was possible for students to enter the professions of law and of medicine by such apprenticeship to master practitioners. And the saving educational quality of all training schools is to be found in the opportunities they afford to the students to work under master nurses.

Not to the lay managers of the training-schools, not to the medical staffs of the hospitals, nor even to the volunteer physician instructors, must we look in testing the educational value of the schools for nurses, but rather to the superintendents and to the head nurses under whom and with whom the students are privileged to work.

With our examination thus directed we cannot decide against the schools. For a nobler company, more truly inspired by highest educational and professional ideals, than the superintendents of our American training-schools cannot be found.

We have now applied five tests in our attempt to decide the question if modern nursing is really a profession. And we have found (1) that in teaching their successors, (2) that in sharing professional advantages and in making their own professional regulations, (3) that in acknowledging the need of continuous study, (4) that in pursuing their profession not primarily for pecuniary gain, and (5) that in requiring sufficient education of those who enter the profession, modern nurses have attained full right to professional standing.

But nurses if they desire their professional rights must demand them. For until nurses understand and assume their professional privileges and obligations there is little hope of any general recognition of the fact that nursing is a profession.

When, many years ago, I was admiring the stand taken by a physician who had refused a rich

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