

claims to entitle the student to practise nursing in Canada or the United States, without further examination. Could anything be more inimical to the interests of patients, nurses, and unsuspecting credulous young women than such a "school"?

We all know of a very real need that does exist, and which "schools" of that kind sometimes pretend to fill, namely, the supplying of trained nurses to the great body of wage-earning and small salaried people, who cannot afford to pay for the services of trained nurses.

Miss Richards's plan of visiting or hourly nursing works well according to reports, but there are relatively few nurses who adopt it; and besides it does not supply the demand for continuous service in cases where the patient is critically ill. "Trained attendants" are advocated by some of the medical profession and Dr. Putnam's paper on that subject read before the Providence Medical Association in February, has been considerably discussed. Her proposition, that hospitals are the places where such attendants should be instructed, appears plausible from one point of view, but to me it seems impracticable. It would complicate too much the training-school arrangements for its regular pupils; it would open another door to the entrance into our profession to a class of woman we are endeavouring, by registration and legislation, to exclude; and it would not supply the real need.

Surely for the great army of honest, intelligent, self-respecting, working people, who have both brain and brawn, but usually limited means, there should be supplied when sickness overtakes them the best kind of nursing. That can be given only by the best trained nurses.

The remedy for the existing want in my opinion lies in education. There are those who think the tendency is to over-educate the nurse—that she is being educated "above her position." We must acknowledge faults that lay us open to such criticism; but a deeper study of the question will bring a different judgment, and it will be seen that those faults exist, not because of education, but because of a lack of it. Education, in its broad sense, co-ordinates the physical, the mental and the spiritual powers of man, and gives him a true sense of his relationship to others.

When that perfect balance can be reached, he will recognise the fact that the law of his being is, to do unto others as he would they should do unto him, and he will live up to that law. The development of the altruistic or "other-regarding" spirit is what we need very much in our education, and its application to our professional work will solve in a practical way that particular problem I have just mentioned, and every other problem that has in view the helping of others. I mean plainly this—that if all trained nurses in the practice of their profession would, as many already do, assume

their full individual share (according to means and ability) of the responsibility and hard work of nursing the sick among any and every class, the question would at least begin to be practically dealt with. There would be an immediate amelioration of the present condition, and an abundant hope of its future improvement. We nurses are the ones to create the sentiment that will supply that demand. It cannot be done without personal effort and self-sacrifice. For those doing private nursing there would need to be more flexibility in the matter of fees, by charging the very wealthy more, others less. To charge a moderate price for people of moderate means would not lower the professional standard; only the character of the work, and the spirit with which it is done can affect that. Given the right spirit in nurses, the sentiment of helpfulness would grow, and there would be more endowments like the "Crerar Fund" of Chicago, which has for its object the employment of trained nurses at their full rates, for people of small means. I do not mean to underestimate the commercial value of our professional work—on the contrary, it cannot be overestimated, when it is of a high order—but I do want to emphasise that we make it more valuable in another way as well—in an ethical way. "Ethics," Jane Addams says, "is but another word for 'righteousness,' that for which men and women of every generation have hungered and thirsted, and without which life becomes meaningless."

Let us endeavour to practise ethics in our daily life, and teach ethics in our training-schools. The advent of Hampton's Nursing Ethics, as an aid, has been timely. It should be a text-book of every pupil and every graduate nurse.

My object in presenting to you a résumé of what has been accomplished and is being done by this Society to improve the education and to elevate the professional standard of the nurse is to impress upon you that it was by co-operation that the results have been obtained. The promotion of "fellowship among members, by meetings, papers, and discussions on professional subjects," is an object that we must keep before us to carry on the good work that was inaugurated by the earnest, far-sighted women who were the promoters of this organisation. I deeply regret that more of them are not with us on this occasion to inspire us with their presence and their wise counsel.

Let us show our loyalty to them and to our common cause by becoming workers for it, and in that way we will bring also a direct benefit to the particular field of work in which we are severally engaged.

Fellowship and every other object of this Society is effectually promoted by our splendid *American Journal of Nursing*, a broad-minded ethical magazine which should be supported and its managers encouraged by every nurse becoming an individual

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)