

the National Associated Alumnae witnessed the formation also of the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools. Through the efforts of a few of its members, as is the history of all reform movements, the necessity of preliminary theoretical instruction had been so successfully demonstrated that, not only had many hospitals adopted the system, but at least three technical schools in large cities had arranged very satisfactory courses. It was due also to this Association that the training of women as executives to take charge of all departments was being met by the course in Hospital Economics at the Teachers' College of Columbia University, New York. The efforts of the Association to raise educational standards, suggesting as a means better and paid instruction, shorter hours, and even tuition fees, had seen such measures adopted in thirty schools. The trend of the efforts of the Alumnae Societies was ever to uniformity, and, in helping to attain this, the *American Journal of Nursing*, a magazine established and maintained by certain representative women, and serving as the official organ of these Associations, had been of inestimable value by keeping these societies, so widely separated by the vast area of territories, in harmonious and intelligent touch. The speaker then described how these two Associations, whose interests are so closely allied, united to form the American Federation of Nurses through which American nurses had become affiliated with their National Council of Women.

Such Associations as these had become mighty bulwarks of the profession. It was the knowledge born of their counsels, and the strength of their union, that made their presentation of the State Bills so intelligent and forceful as to carry conviction as to the nurses' ability to be their own examiners and make their own educational standards.

Miss Goodrich referred to the value of the work done by the Nurses' Settlement in New York, now recognised and employed by the Board of Health, and of their work under the School Board.

Thus, from the day when Florence Nightingale, eager to master the first systematised course for nurses, betook herself to the little town of Kaiserswerth, the march of progress had never ceased. To that woman of keen intellect and rare executive ability it was but a single step from the simple ministrant to the sick to an acknowledged authority on hospital construction, organisation, and administration; and those of her disciples sent to sow the seeds of this new profession in the fertile soil of a young and ambitious country were to witness a development almost as marvellous—a development which, in enlarging the sphere of woman's usefulness, called for all the highest attributes of womanhood, and which, having opened the door into the realm of science and sociology, necessitated a continual raising of educational standards.

Signorina BIONE CAMMEO next presented a paper on the care of the sick in Italy, and said that at present the reform of nursing had been but little taken up by Italian women. As in other Roman Catholic countries, the care of the sick in Italy was mainly in the hands of the Religious Orders, which did not regard their task as a professional one, requiring, like all other professions, a course of special study, but as one of the seven works of mercy. In Italy, therefore, only a few of the hospitals had a staff of lay nurses, the others being nursed by Religious Orders. Nevertheless, the introduction of modern principles of nursing has begun. At Rome, through the efforts of Mme. Anna Celli, there has been established for three years a course of theoretical and practical instruction in nursing with the object of teaching young girls how to care for the sick. The first year two pupils entered for this course, the following year thirty-nine, and the third year thirty-three, and these girls had found that they could become nurses without loss of dignity or status. Much, however, still remained to be done. There was the opposition of the Religious Orders, and of the Government, which possessed the confidence of the Directors of Hospitals. It was a sad fact that the Directors of many hospitals did not yet recognise the necessity for better nursing conditions, or the advantages they themselves would gain by their enforcement. However, said the speaker, the world was progressing, and of late years many reforms had been accomplished in Italian hospitals. Thus there was ground for hope that even in the direction of nursing reform the note of progress would soon be sounded.

MISS MAUD BANFIELD, Superintendent of the Polyclinic Hospital, Philadelphia, said that with regard to the condition of nursing in America she had little of value to add to what had been so well said by previous speakers. She would like, however, to lay emphasis on the fact that in all the States, with one exception, in which State Registration had become law, the Examining Boards were composed of nurses, and this entailed the Training of Examiners.

One great benefit of the public movement for the Registration of Nurses had been to bring home to the public how the nursing question affected them. Rich or poor, all must be ill, and all must die some day, and it was well, therefore, that the necessity for efficient nursing, and their personal interest in it, should be brought home to them.

In the States such opposition as there had been to Registration had come from the Correspondence Schools. There was one in Pennsylvania, for instance, which professed to teach nursing in a course of theoretical lectures extending over a period of ten weeks, for a fee of twenty dollars, and also from schools which gave very little instruction, and that on one subject only.

Referring to the Post-Graduate Course at Teachers'

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)