

Professional Review.

THE REPORT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SUPERINTENDENTS.

The Eleventh Annual Report of the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for Nurses is of exceptional interest, for it includes not only a review of the history of the Society, given by Miss Georgia M. Nevins, Superintendent of Nurses at the Garfield Memorial Hospital, Washington, in her Presidential Address, but it also contains the Report of the First Meeting of the American Federation of Nurses. This, as many of our readers know, is composed of delegates from the Superintendents' Society and the Nurses' National Associated Alumnae, who elect their own chairman and carry on the business of the Federation, which acts in America as the link between these two societies, and the International Council of Nurses, in the same way that the Provisional Committee of the National League acts in this country.

At the opening session of the Superintendents' Society, Miss Nevins, as President, spoke as follows:—"I am tempted to give a very brief *résumé* of the Society's history. In 1893, at the World's Fair in Chicago, at the suggestion of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, of London, whom we remember so pleasantly in connection with the International Congress at Buffalo, a Nursing Section was formed, and Miss Isabel Hampton, then Superintendent of Nurses at the Johns' Hopkins Hospital, was appointed chairman.

"For the first time in this country papers were read upon topics of interest to nurses, and there were present a number of Superintendents of Training-Schools, most of whom were from the United States and from Canada. The chair took the opportunity of suggesting the formation of an association, with the result that a meeting was held, at which eighteen Superintendents were present. I am glad to say some of them are with us to-day.

"The objects and advantages of association were outlined, rules and regulations formed, and officers of the preliminary organisation were chosen. The object was as follows:—"To further the best interests of the nursing profession by establishing and maintaining a universal standard of training and by promoting fellowship among its members, by meetings, papers, and discussion on nursing subjects, and by interchange of opinions. The results have surpassed their highest expectations.

"The importance of this step can be appreciated only by those who remember the curious spirit of jealousy and lack of friendly feeling which existed between schools in those days. There is temptation to dwell upon some of the numerous subjects which seemed clamouring for consideration in this society, all of which may be found in our annual reports, but I shall only mention a few of them, that we may better realise the results of co-operation, and be encouraged to work faithfully towards the solution of those difficulties which still beset us. A longer course of training, shorter hours of practical work for nurses, and a uniform curriculum have been momentous questions from the very beginning.

"At our last convention in Pittsburg a Committee

on Education was formed, and the reports at this meeting are expected to give an excellent idea of what has been accomplished along educational lines in schools for nurses.

"Through the efforts of this society the Nurses' Associated Alumnae was formed in 1896, now representing 7,000 graduate nurses. In 1900 the two societies were affiliated, and under the title of the American Federation of Nurses were admitted to the National Council of Women of the United States. 'To provide opportunities for nurses to meet together from all parts of the world to confer on questions relating to the welfare of their patients and their profession,' the International Council of Nurses was founded in London in 1899, and since then there have been two very interesting international meetings, one at Buffalo, during the Pan-American Exposition, and the other in Berlin last year.

"At this meeting of American nurses our sisters across the seas are with us in spirit, and we in turn extend our hearty goodwill to them in their efforts towards improved conditions.

"One of the most important steps taken by this society was the establishment of the hospital Economics Course at the Teachers College, Columbia University.

"Recalling that lack of opportunity for special training in administrative work in our schools, so distinctly felt by most of us when we assumed those responsibilities, the importance of which, fortunately, we but half realised, only serves to fill us with envy of those women who are profiting by systematic work in those subjects which not only make them better teachers, but also fit them for so much of that reform and preventive work with which trained nurses are allying themselves.

"Would that a Carnegie or Rockefeller might be made to see the true value of this work, that the chair of hospital economics might be suitably endowed!

"Registration is a burning question with us, and we shall listen with much interest to the reports from those States who have been so fortunate as to have secured legislation. We are told that the effect upon the standard in schools for nurses is already pronounced, and future benefits to the public and to the nurse cannot be overestimated."

The subjects discussed covered a wide area. Papers were contributed on "Nurses' Homes and School Buildings," by Miss Mary Gilmour; on "Economy in Hospital Work," by Miss Mary A. Samuel; on "Training-School Libraries, Scholarships, Loan Funds, Tuition Fees," by Miss A. L. Alline; on "The Introduction of Salaried Instruction in the Training-Schools," by Miss A. W. Goodrich; on "Some Results of Preparatory Instruction," by Miss M. Adelaide Nutting; on "The Introduction of District Nursing into the Training-School Curriculum," by Miss Mary L. Keith; on "The Present Status of Educational Methods," by Miss Mary M. Riddle; and on "Post Graduate Study for Nurses," by Miss Clara L. Noyes.

The Report thus contains a valuable record of the result of experience in these interesting and important subjects, detailed by some of the American Superintendents whose names are honoured and esteemed not only in their own country, but also in Great Britain.

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