

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,079.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1908.

Vol. XLI.

Editorial.

SHOULD NURSING SCHOOLS BE ENDOWED?

The education of nurses becomes yearly more expensive if nursing schools are to keep pace with the requirements of the profession of medicine and of the public; and the matron who places before her committee well-considered schemes for improving the curriculum in the school which she superintends is constantly confronted, not with a lack of sympathy with her aspirations, but with the lack of funds to carry them out. Committees do not feel justified in spending large sums of money, subscribed primarily for the relief of the sick-poor, on nursing education, even if that education is to make the nurses trained in the hospitals which these committees control more efficient for subsequent work. Their duty is to provide efficient nurses for the sick-poor in their own hospitals, not to provide their nurses with special educational advantages. The question thus arises whether nursing schools should be endowed, and, in our opinion, this would be a much more desirable method of maintaining them than by adopting short terms of training, and utilising the services of the nurses subsequently on a private staff to replenish the hospital coffers, or to sell certificates for short terms of training to those who are willing to pay for them.

Miss M. Adelaide Nutting, Professor of Domestic Science at Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, and Chairman of the Finance Committee in connection with the Hospital Economics Council, advocated the endowment of Nurse Training Schools at the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses in the following words:—

"It is so important for the community to realise the great burden that rests upon the Superintendent of the Training School.

The School for Nurses has a large and rapidly-widening function in preparing the nurse for adequate service to the community, and it seems to us (the Finance Committee) that if this were fully understood it would not rest upon the hospitals entirely to find means for the maintenance of our schools. We are not training nurses entirely for the benefit of hospitals, doctors, nor for private patients, but we are training them for useful service to the people in all matters which affect their health and well-being; for intelligent efforts towards the prevention of illness, as well as intelligent and skilful care of the sick; and just as medical schools, for instance, may turn to the community and say, 'Give us money for buildings and teachers so that we may supply you with well-trained physicians,' so we, in view of the public as well as the private importance of our work, have a right to turn to the community and say, 'Help us also—so that we may train and send out to you women who can understand their responsibilities and meet them fully.' A great many cities are putting large sums into magnificent buildings. I would, in many instances, cut down the cost of the buildings and put it into the training of the women who are to take charge of them."

The case for the endowment of Nurse Training Schools could not have better put. We commend it to the attention of members of hospital Committees and to all who are interested in educational matters. Everyone concerned in education knows that it is a costly matter to provide a comprehensive educational curriculum for the members of any profession, and, in our opinion, on no department of professional education could money be more profitably expended than on that of nursing, which, although hampered and restricted by want of means, has already achieved so much for the benefit of the community.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)