

# THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

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

No. 1,288

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1912.

Vol. XLIX.

## EDITORIAL.

### A DEGREE IN NURSING.

An interesting development of the work at Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, affecting the Course of Nursing and Health, is the division of the College into two Departments, the School of Education, and the new School of Practical Arts. The report of Miss Nutting, the Director, to the Annual Meeting of the Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, which, it will be remembered, initiated the course (at first known as the course in Hospital Economics) is published in full in the transactions of the Society, and shows how the good work, quietly begun by a few Superintendents, has prospered, till now a student at Teachers' College working for a degree, may receive substantial recognition for time spent in hospital while taking her practical nursing course. She enters the School of Practical Arts direct from a high school, takes her preliminary sciences in one or two years, enters a nursing school, and if the work done in the school is of a high character, with good solid theoretical courses, it is counted towards the degree, and the student can return on the satisfactory completion of her course to finish work for her degree.

This is the first time that any college has undertaken to give credit for the years spent in a nursing school, and, as Miss Goodrich pointed out when the report was presented, Miss Nutting is mainly responsible for having secured this recognition.

The result of this achievement is that New York must be accorded the position of leader in the world of nursing education, for nowhere else has nursing been organized on such liberal lines, or accorded a place in the university curriculum. We congratulate the American Superintendents, and especially Miss Nutting, on the result of

their public spirited work, and American nurses on the unique educational advantages which have been secured to them. Is it too much to hope that since it is too late for this country to have the honour of leading the way in the organization of nursing education on university lines, it will at least not delay to recognize that this is the place where it rightly belongs, and that the authorities of the Nursing Schools of the large London and provincial hospitals will seek to place these schools in the relations to University education which have already been established with such excellent results in the case of medical education.

Nothing would counteract more effectively the downward grade of nursing in this country, and that this is necessary cannot be doubted. On all sides one hears the opinion expressed that the type of woman entering the nursing profession does not compare favourably as to education, physique, or endurance with that which was available a quarter of a century ago. There is, indeed, little to attract the more intelligent class of woman to nursing at the present time, except her irradicable love of humanity and her desire to serve it. The quality and thoroughness of the training received is uncertain, there is no legal recognition of qualifications at its conclusion. There is nothing to differentiate the thoroughly trained, competent nurse in the public mind from the incompetent and half-trained woman, and promotion is almost invariably the result of influence rather than merit.

To give a guarantee of a thorough professional training, followed by legal status, is the surest means of inducing the most conscientious type of candidates to seek admission to nurse training schools.

It is to be hoped that the example of organization in the United States of America may be our inspiration.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)