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EDITORIAL.

HOW TO ATTRACT SUITABLE APPLICANTS.

The difficulty of obtaining suitable applicants for training is a question which is attracting attention on the other side of the Atlantic as well as in this country, and Miss M. A. Nutting, R.N., Director of the Course in Nursing and Health at Teachers' College, New York, discussed the question exhaustively at a meeting of the New York City League of Nursing Education, in a paper entitled "How can we Attract Suitable Applicants to our Training Schools."

In the first place Miss Nutting shows that the difficulty in attracting suitable applicants is not peculiar to training schools for nurses. Medical schools, law schools, theological schools, the navy and army are all in much the same plight. All the professional schools are obviously unable to attract and send forth enough competent men and women to do the work they have undertaken. Miss Nutting further points out that in practically all these professions the effort to improve the quality and character of aspirants for admission has taken one large general form and direction.

It has been to lift the requirements for admission higher, to improve the quality of the education and training offered, and, through these means and others, to improve the status of the profession itself; to make it more efficient, more respected, and honoured in society.

Discussing what are the conditions of nursing, and of work, in hospitals and training schools, which are keeping out candidates, she enumerates the following objections:—

1. The long hours of hard ward work, still the rule for student nurses in hospitals, and especially the twelve hours of night work.

2. The amount of ordinary routine house-work frequently included in the training

throughout the entire course. It is contended that its chief purpose is to save the expense of domestic labour, and that it should be turned over to the department of domestic service to which it belongs.

3. The elementary and superficial character of the instruction, the limited amount afforded, and the pitifully inadequate preparation of many of those who teach. Further, that if the teaching were of the highest excellence it would be impossible for students to profit by it after so many hours of hard physical work, such as is involved in the actual care of the sick, work which is exacting also from the standpoint of mental strain and responsibility.

Miss Nutting points out that to reconstruct what is called "ward work," and sift out of it a good deal that need not be done systematically by pupil nurses, would greatly improve their training and tend to remove the reasonable objections that intelligent use is not made of the student's time, strength, and mental powers.

All teaching in training schools should be done by nurses, or other instructors, expert in the subjects they teach, whether theoretical, practical, or personal. They should be adequately paid for such service, and given proper status and place, and equipment with which to carry on work recognized as essential and indispensable.

Lastly, Miss Nutting pleads for a closer relationship between the Superintendent of nurses, her staff of assistants, and the pupils of the school. A stronger sympathy and understanding on both sides must be created.

Students must obtain a clearer comprehension of the purposes and value of discipline, and must carry it willingly and intelligently into efforts to strengthen themselves and to overcome weaknesses. There must be mutual confidence and respect, and students must feel that their happiest and most useful days have been spent in hospital and training school.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)