

must have a place among institutions. It should be recognised as highway robbery and murder on a vast scale, and if we had, in our midst, organized hordes of highway robbers and cutthroats, nurses might follow in their wake to help rescue the wounded and dying, but if they began to take these bands at their own estimate, share in their feelings, and applaud their rivalries, then would be the dangerous psychological moment, for it is this ultimate approbation that keeps war alive and feeds it with sentimentalism and covers it with a mantle that obscures its real ghastliness.

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

LETTER IV. FROM SAN FRANCISCO.

DEAR MADAM,—The wonderful and inspiring joint Nurses' Convention, which it has been our privilege to attend, is now over, but the memories of it we shall cherish, as some of the happiest of our experience. About 600 delegates attended. Every session at which I was present has been of deep interest; my only regret was that, owing to the obvious fact that I could not be in three places at once, I could not attend them all; but I picked the brains of good-natured and indulgent people, for I was unwilling to lose anything that could interest and edify my own countrywomen. It speaks well, does it not, for the professional keenness of the American nurses that they travelled such great distances—as many of them did—to attend their Convention, and also that the delightful attractions of the Panama-Pacific Exposition were not strong enough to prevent them from attending in such good numbers the various sessions? Business is business to them, and a serious matter, but when it is over they also know how to play. Comparisons are not always "odious"; on the contrary, they are often encouraging and helpful, especially when it means a retrospective glance into the past. Dr. Aked, in his interesting address to his audience of nurses, on the evening preceding the opening of the Convention, reminded them that 100 years ago there was not a trained nurse in the world, and aptly alluded to those great pioneers, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, and also Clara Barton of Civil War times.

The Americans are nothing if not thorough, and in nothing are the American nurses more thorough, more insistent, and more unanimous—as far as I am able to judge—than in their desire and efforts to set up a high standard of professional education. Their standards are already high, but apparently not high enough to satisfy them. Nothing but the best for the sick will satisfy them. This was specially emphasised at the Sessions of the National League of Nursing Education, of which Miss Noyes—Superintendent of Bellevue and the allied hospitals—is President. The members of this League comprise those engaged in teaching the fine art of nursing; it is a long-

established League, with a comparatively new name; it was formerly the Association of American Superintendents, but having grown automatically into an educational league, it took the name. One of the Sessions of that body dealt entirely with training school problems. Proposals were made for newer courses of study, and broader training institutions. One of the problems which appear to exercise the mind of the League is also one of our own, namely, the failure of more young women of educational qualifications to select nursing as a profession. I heard Miss Goodrich—who spoke on many occasions—urge the attractiveness, the satisfaction, the joy of the life of a nurse. She, being Assistant Professor of Nursing, naturally emphasised the importance of a high standard of education, both general and professional. It is the opinion of herself and other nursing experts of this country that the qualification for membership of the profession should be a high school education, or the equivalent. This is the qualification maintained at the Bellevue Hospital. It was during a session of the National League of Nursing Education (a very suitable occasion) that leave was asked of the President, and readily granted, to Miss Charlotte Anita Whitney, of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, to address the meeting on that very important subject. The women of California enjoy State Suffrage, but the speaker, in a few words, urged the necessity for the fuller, and wider political freedom for women, namely, federal suffrage. Here was another pleasing and interesting example of the American women not being satisfied with *half* measures, they must have full measures of opportunities when the well-being of their country is concerned. Miss Whitney proposed the amendment to the National Constitution, known as the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment." This was carried unanimously by the members present. One of the special features of the Convention has been the discussion of the effect of the recently-passed State of California 8-hour law for women upon student nurses. It does not affect graduate nurses. One morning session was largely devoted to it. Opinions for and against appear to be pretty equal. One thing is abundantly clear—it is an expensive measure. I was told that it necessitated increasing the number of pupils to one-third.

At the Monday afternoon Session of the American Nurses' Association the reports of various Councils and Committees were taken. By the invitation of Miss Goodrich, President of the International Council of Nurses, Miss Hulme gave her message of greeting from the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, and great regret has been expressed by your American friends at the absence of yourself and Miss Breay. Miss Goodrich also gave me an opportunity of giving a brief report of the work of our National Council. I hope you won't find this letter too long for insertion. I have much more to tell you.

BEATRICE KENT.

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