

Teachers' College, and lastly, but always first, our schools of nursing and the recognition and respect that is universally granted to the graduate from such, we know not how well our unity would stand should it be subjected to similar pressure.

Far away from the field of action as we are, and without the same compelling and disorganizing excuse, we have seen the term "Nurse" and the duties of such assumed by American women of all ages and social standing, both in the past and at the present time. Nay, more: during the present conflict they have pressed to the front, and, with much ostentation and newspaper notoriety, have proclaimed themselves as war nurses.

We, who are interested in the larger schools of nursing, have been besieged by young women, with strong social backing and evidence of medical support, hardly out of their teens, who wanted a few weeks in our wards and dispensaries, in order, as one said, "to get an idea of how a ward was conducted," but, above all things, "to learn bandaging." One would think that all the secrets of nursing lay tightly wound in a roller bandage. Far be it from any of us to discourage or belittle the effort of the lay woman in whatever legitimate way she may at such a time elect. Such desire should be fostered and encouraged, but we should stand firmly against the assumption by any untrained lay person of the title, uniform, or professional duties of the properly prepared nurse. Through the protection of our schools, our professional rights and duties, we protect the community, both in peace and war, from charlatanism and quackery. Are we, as a profession, sufficiently unified to accomplish this?

This can best be answered by a careful analysis of the foundations upon which our schools of nursing are resting, for upon the school the future of our beloved profession is depending. Unendowed, dependent upon the hospital with which they are connected for support, they cannot be considered as true educational institutions, for it is a well-known fact that all such require money in order to live. Indeed, some of those on Boards of Control of hospitals unhesitatingly say that the school for nurses is only a department of the hospital, like the laundry, and its head a "paid employee," responsible solely for the nursing care of the patient. They seem to fail utterly in comprehending the dual obligation, not only that to the patient, but to the pupil and her future. Important as the pupil may be to the hospital, she is, apparently, far more important to the public as a graduate. Never in the history of nursing has the demand for highly educated

and carefully prepared women for the widening field of nursing been so insistent and so persistent.

We view the situation in England with almost sympathetic condescension. Are we justified in so doing? Sum up the evidence presented on all sides. Study the campaign in New York State for the last three years, two of which were spent in trying to secure an amendment to the Nurse Practice Act, to restrict the use of the word "nurse," when used for the care of the sick, to those properly qualified, and the third and last to bring all schools giving a diploma as a nurse under the Department of Education—a requirement extended to all other types of schools, even chiropody. Study laws existing in other States; in one, no practical examinations are held because it is not "constitutional for a woman to hold office," the Board of Examiners being doctors; therefore no practical examinations are given. Could we not do something to bring about greater uniformity, and at least establish minimum entrance requirements, and thus maintain proper standards of education if our unity and solidarity is as sincere and substantial as it seems? Do we not sometimes even now hear an occasional nurse say, "What has registration done for me?"

Friends and Members, this is not the moment for any one of us to ask these questions. It is the moment for work, individually and collectively. We must work for our schools and suitable endowment for such, our standards of education and professional work, our organizations, proper laws of control and licensure, our position and professional recognition, and, above all, we must educate ourselves to believe in the dignity of our calling. Nothing ever gains the respect of the world or becomes practicable or reaches beyond the purely practicable until it has been fought for, until someone believes in the project and makes a gallant fight. We have but to turn to the pages of history, bristling with examples, viz.:—the Emancipation of the Slave, Liberty of the Press, Free Education, Equal Suffrage, and the highest example of all—the Christian Religion. These have all been found absolutely practicable, now that they have become established facts. Yet thousands have suffered discomfort, loss, or even died to make them practicable.

We must not lose courage, for signs of awakening are manifesting themselves on all sides. Look, and you will see them for yourselves. All that which I have asked will come, but only through education. First, in our own ranks, then outside; and in the maintenance of harmony and unity of thought and action in our dearly loved organizations.

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