

A PRACTICAL STANDARD OF NURSING.*

By ETHEL GORDON FENWICK.

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A STANDARD OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION.

Starting from the fact that at the present time there is no organisation of the profession, I would explain, briefly, the views which I have for some years advocated upon this subject. In the first place, I consider that every woman who desires to be recognised as a trained nurse, must be prepared to pass through a definite and organised curriculum of education to fit her for the duties and responsibilities which will devolve upon her, as a member of an honourable public profession, in the same way in which men make it the chief business of their lives to qualify for the work to which they intend to devote themselves. With women, frequently, the work which they undertake is considered as secondary to domestic and family claims, to be taken up and laid down at will. I desire, therefore, to emphasise the necessity that exists, for women to grasp the fact, that, if they are to fit themselves to win confidence and distinction in any work, in which they desire to earn their living, they must face the necessity of passing through years of educational drudgery, during which all other interests must be secondary and subservient. I would venture, therefore, to submit the following curriculum of a practical standard nursing education.

CURRICULUM OF NURSING EDUCATION.

The Nursing schools in connection with our large hospitals should for the future be organized on a definite collegiate basis. The majority of them are now schools only in name. The organization of Nursing schools on such a basis would necessitate the establishment of a system of preliminary education for nurses in general and special knowledge, which women, desiring to become probationers, might be advised to attain before entering the wards for practical work, so that they may begin this work, in the same way that medical students do at the present time, with a basis of scientific knowledge. This preliminary education could be acquired in existing colleges, or by the institution of preliminary schools attached to the large general hospitals, and candidates for posts as probationers in hospitals should either present their certificates for the various

branches of knowledge necessary, or submit themselves to an examination by the Matron and Medical Staff of the nursing school which they desire to enter. The holders of the certificates, given upon passing the Oxford and Cambridge Local Senior Examinations, or the Second Class College of Preceptors' Examinations; should be dispensed from a preliminary examination in general knowledge, but this should be tested in the case of all other candidates. I would suggest that preliminary nursing education should be divided in the following manner:—

The Domestic Arts.—To include proficiency in dietary for the sick, needlework, and cleaning.

Practical Nursing.—To include the personal care of the patient, bedmaking, bathing in all its various details, external applications, general and local, the use of the clinical thermometer, preparation of patients for examination and operations, preparation of operating theatre, care and cleansing of surgical instruments and appliances, preparation and use of lotions, bandaging, splint padding, and the preparation of dressings.

Nursing Ethics.—including hospital etiquette, manners, and discipline.

Theoretical Nursing.—Elementary anatomy, physiology, chemistry, therapeutics, hygiene, and massage.

Having successfully passed through this preliminary teaching, preferably in a residential college, the candidate would then be admitted as a probationer into the wards of the hospital, where I should advise that a term of three years' training and experience should be passed. I would divide her practical experience in the wards in the following manner:—As *probationer* on day duty for eighteen months, three months to be spent respectively in male and female medical wards, three months in male and female surgical wards, six months in special wards, including those of a Fever hospital, during which period of training she should receive systematic clinical instruction given by the Sister of the ward, courses of lectures and demonstrations during the same period on the nursing of diseases in special sections, each surgical operation in the general wards, and lectures and demonstrations on the special diseases of each organ as treated separately by specialists, including diseases of the brain, eye, ear, throat, skin, and infectious diseases. The following eighteen months should be spent on alternate night and day duty as a *staff probationer*. A *staff nurse* should signify a certificated nurse.

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