

THE ARMY SCHOOL OF NURSING, U.S.A.

AT WASHINGTON.

The Commencement Exercises of the first class of Nurses to be graduated from the Army School of Nursing, U.S.A., which took place at the Walter Reed General Hospital, Washington, D.C., were celebrated in a manner worthy of so great an occasion. To the joy of the Graduating Class, Miss Annie Goodrich, founder and first Dean of the School, was able to be with them. The diplomas were presented by Major-General Merritte W. Ireland, Surgeon-General of the Army, and Major Julia C. Stimson, R.N., Superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps, the present Dean of the School, gave a historical survey of the foundation of the School. *The Come-Back* devoted the whole of one issue, which is "dedicated to the graduating nurses," to reporting the event, and even that did not suffice, and the following one again took up the theme.

MAJOR STIMSON'S REPORT.

Major Julia C. Stimson introduced her Report by saying:—

"The class of student nurses now about to graduate is the largest group of nurses that has ever graduated at a training school for nurses. It is also the first group that has ever been trained under governmental control, and the only class of nurses that has ever been a part of a training school which is connected with the Army.

"The school was authorised by the former Secretary of War on May 25, 1918, at a time when the Surgeon-General of the Army was stating publicly that more than 20,000 nurses would be needed at once for the Army.

"This group of young women entered the Army School of Nursing in 1918 as an answer to the urgent appeal to all young women of the country to meet the great shortage of nurses for the Army. Eighteen hundred students began the course, but after the armistice an opportunity was given to withdraw from the course for those who so desired, and many resigned. Five hundred and fifteen are now completing the three-years' course. The other branch of the school will hold its graduating exercises at the Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, on July 14, and 109 young women will at that time receive their diplomas.

"Many difficulties were overcome in establishing the school, as all arrangements had to be made to conform to the regulations governing the management of civil employees of the Medical Department, because in this way only, without a special Act of Congress, could a group of students be taken into the Army system. The problems and adjustments were made with comparatively little difficulty, however, as every help was given by the officers of the Medical Department, both in the Surgeon-General's office and at the camps.

"The school has been accredited by the regents of the University of the State of New York, and by the State Boards of Nurse Examiners of California and Illinois, and the graduates of the school

are eligible for registration in all States where there are laws governing the registration of nurses.

"The health of the students has been remarkably good. There have, of course, been cases of serious illness, and, unfortunately, twenty-five young women who entered the school have given their lives while in training. The last one of this group died within two weeks of the graduating exercises, having nearly completed the course. The names of these students are on the Honour Roll of the school, as they died in the service of their country, and their names and their memories will always be held in reverence, as they gave their lives in as noble a cause as did any soldier who fell on the field of battle.

"This group and this event can never be duplicated. It is a red-letter day in the history of nursing education, for although the Army School of Nursing is to continue, the classes will be much smaller and the conditions will be peace-time conditions.

"It can truthfully be said that no group of student nurses has ever had such opportunities for service, nor such advantages under which to receive their professional training."

Major Stimson then presented Miss Goodrich to the class.

ADDRESS BY MISS ANNIE W. GOODRICH.

Miss Goodrich said in part:—

"It fills me with profound emotion when I attempt to address you to-day, for this is, as Major Stimson has said, a most unique occasion—unique in the history of nursing, and unique, I imagine, in the history of any military establishment. Never before, I believe, has a military department opened an establishment for the training of young women. Never before has the dream of a training school for nurses been a part of their function. In the history of nursing it is no less unique because it has grouped together a company of young women greater than has ever before come together in one school.

"Never could it have been imagined that a military establishment, at the time of the great stress and strain of war, would find it possible to do this thing, and I want to say right here, and now, that the time is coming, and is not far off, when we shall have the kind of grasp, the kind of imagination, that will reveal to us that no person ever does anything in this world alone. When one person does something entirely alone, then I fancy that person will be the only living thing on this planet.

"I want to say that there never was an occasion where I so much wanted to speak what is in my heart, but it is a difficult thing at this great moment to say the word that is effective. No woman ever faced an occasion when she more longed to give a message that would carry. I cannot tell you all that has happened in my mind within the last few days whenever I tried to think what I should say to you as you finish your training to-day. One thing has been uppermost, and that is, 'What will they do with it?' Not alone

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