

## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES. THE NECESSITY FOR AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD OF NURSING EDUCATION.\*

BY MISS HELEN L. PEARSE.

(*Delegate of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland.*)

In presenting to you to-day a paper on the need for an International Standard of Education and Training required to produce a Professional Trained Nurse, I am again bringing before you the views of Mrs. Hampton Robb, expressed at Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's request, in a paper read at the London meeting of the International Council of Nurses in 1909.

Between 1909 and 1922 much progress has been made in various countries, notably in Mrs. Robb's own country, America—would that we had not lost her by a tragic death, and that she could have again brought before you her far-seeing policy and lucid statement of the need for International agreement on this all-important subject.

Since our last meeting at Cologne, when an interesting synopsis of the replies received from the Affiliated National Councils, in answer to a Questionnaire dealing with the Preliminary Training of Probationers, was presented by the late Miss Lanschot Hubrecht, the World War has occurred; and although the war has greatly emphasised the value of trained nursing, and how vast a part it has to sustain in the life of nations, it has also prevented the International exchange of ideas and opinions on which an International Standard must be founded.

The sphere of the Trained Nurse is ever-widening, and she has now to meet demands far greater than she ever did before.

In England, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, that eminent pioneer in Nursing Education, and those associated with her, have seen the fruition of their long struggle for State Registration, and a Bill with this object was brought in by the first Minister of Health, Dr. Addison, and received the Royal Assent in December, 1919. The General Nursing Council for England and Wales was nominated by him, and has been hard at work framing Rules, preparing a Syllabus of training, and carrying out all the preliminaries necessary to the opening of the State Register ever since. Similar Acts for Scotland and Ireland were passed at the same time. The Syllabus of Training I have now before me (and a few copies to give away if any delegate would like to have it). It has been largely adopted by Training Schools already, and must have an immediate effect in improving the status and education of nurses. I regret that Psychology is not directly mentioned. It should have an important place in the nursing curriculum.†

\* Paper presented to the International Council of Nurses, May 23rd ult.

† In the standard curriculum defined by the Committee on Education of the National League of Nursing Education, U.S.A., it is recommended that Psychology be included in the first year of a nurse's study. The Committee consider that a large proportion of nurses' blunders occur because they do not possess a working knowledge of Psychology.

This Nominated Council will cease from its labours not later than December next, when the Registered Nurses will be in a position to elect their own representatives upon it, and from then onwards, it is our hope, that the Registered Nurses will become increasingly responsible for the Government of their affairs.

One name, that of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, stands out from all others in the attainment of this far-reaching reform. Standing apart from all vested interests—which are always prominent in obstructing self-government of work by those who do it—she has thrown her great and statesmanlike ability, her health and strength—nay, her life itself into this cause; money and leisure have been freely given to maintaining a weekly Professional newspaper, THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, which is a model to all such organs, and has been the only source of information of any value in England on national and international Nursing affairs since its inception.

Associated with her in this important work in devoted collaboration is Miss M. Breay, our Hon. Treasurer. The debt which professional nursing owes to them is almost beyond computing.

Referring to Mrs. Hampton Robb's paper, I think her classification of the problems of Nursing Education remains as good to-day as in 1909.

1. *The Principal of the School.*—Qualifications: Education, Training, Special Training and cert. of qualifications for responsible position.

2. *Curriculum of Training.*—(a) Preliminary Course, (b) Affiliation of Schools, (c) Nursing Literature, (d) Central Examinations by Boards of Examiners. Registration—State.

3. *The Candidate.*—Education, Age Limit and Character; Remuneration.

4. *Post-Graduate Courses.*—Special Subjects for Practical Training in International Exchange; Examinations; Remuneration; Directories of Employment.

1. The Principal, or as we call her still, the Matron and Superintendent of Nurses. In this direction a great step has been made in the general consensus of opinion that the arduous work of teaching should not be asked of one who has to administer and manage a large institution, and that a Sister-Tutor specially qualified, adapted for this work, should be appointed to assist her. But this will not alter the fact that the head of an institution in which professional nurses are trained, must be in herself the example of what the training should produce, and certainly the first question for an International Committee would be the special qualification and examination which should be required of a nurse to qualify her to become a Superintendent of Nurses, and to endeavour to get authorities making such important appointments to adopt the standard thus set up. Sisters in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service are required to give such evidence before promotion to the position of Matron. Who of us has not seen the set-back which befalls a Training School, which, after possessing a Superintendent and Matron of wide views and high standards, on her departure finds her opposite

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