

conclusions from their experiments and reproduce their experiences in written form so that others may learn from them.

The second field of scientific activity for our nurses has been the observation of infants and young children in the minutest details, which do not strike the doctor. He, as a rule, is only present for a short time, but the nurse can observe the child day and night. Thus, for instance, a head nurse in our infant department has worked out an entirely new system for charting appetite.

A third field in which our nurses do independent work in a successful manner is in the observation, analysis and treatment of mentally abnormal children. The method of getting the children to play together and thereby bring to light their true character was created by a nurse.

We should like nurses to have scientific magazines similar to those for doctors in which their articles, shorter or longer, could be published without difficulty. This would, in a few years' time, lead to competition in scientific activity among nurses, a state of affairs which would be most satisfactory for the nurses themselves and of great service to suffering humanity.

#### Selection of Students for Schools of Nursing.

In the absence of Miss Marian Durell, Superintendent of Nurses, City Hospital, New York, who had prepared a paper on "The Selection of Students for Schools of Nursing," a summary of this was presented by the President, Miss Nina D. Gage. Miss Durell pointed out that in the educational world, particularly in colleges, there is much discussion about stiffening entrance requirements, and the selective procedure most effective in choosing students from among the increasing number of applicants. We in the nursing schools do not share in this problem to the extent we desire. For we may as well acknowledge frankly that with us the predominating question has been the recruiting, not the selecting of students. The great majority of nursing school superintendents find themselves in a position humiliatingly analogous to that of the cook who, wishing to make a super-excellent rabbit stew, read in the cook-book, "First catch your rabbit." So most of us, however, ardently imbued with the desire to train a fine type of nurse, find that our big problem is first to catch our nurse.

Yet, within limits, there is a certain amount of selecting to be done in every school. We must distinguish between the eligible and the ineligible, the obviously unfit must be rejected, and, later on, those who fail to meet our standards must be eliminated.

The methods employed show remarkable uniformity throughout the nursing world, and involve the use of application blank, personal letter, health certificate, character references, educational credentials, and, whenever possible, an interview. The procedure also is one that has the sanction of time. In looking over the files of our school, kept when Miss Louise Darce and Miss Diana Kimber were in charge, I was interested to note how similar the methods of thirty and forty years ago were to those still in vogue.

Miss Durell referred to the wide use now made by educational authorities of psychological tests as well as character tests, and states also that Teachers' College, Columbia University, has for some time used intelligence tests as a pre-requisite to work for an M.A.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test is also widely used, as "there are many factors other than intelligence which determine a student's standing," yet in the main it is found, "with remarkably few exceptions, the higher a student's score in the psychological examination the better his record in college."

#### The Case Study Method.

Miss Gertrude Hodgman, Assisting Professor in the Yale University School of Nursing, U.S.A., in an arresting and stimulating paper which (abridged) we print below, spoke as follows:—

The subject of discussion at this meeting seems to me a most significant one in nursing education—for we are emphasising the thought which is behind the acts of nursing, rather than the acts or skills themselves. We are considering the nurse now as a student, an individual with whom we are laying the foundation for professional growth. We are thinking of her apart from any economic and social need which any institutions may have for her services. We are interesting ourselves in adapting educational methods which are considered sound in other vocations to the vocation of nursing. We are stressing the fact that rule of thumb methods, inflexible rules and routines, whose chief value lies in the fact that they are "fool proof"; efficiency methods whose only aim is to get a certain amount of necessary work done by a certain number of people—these do not serve best as methods of educating women to meet the growing demands and opportunities in nursing to-day.

Some of us perhaps may question the wisdom of changing radically any methods which are so successful as our present ones in accomplishing the care of large numbers of patients in our hospitals at a minimum cost. These methods have brought nursing to its present state of success and efficiency at least.

But I wonder if the application of better methods of teaching may not open up new avenues of service in nursing, especially along the lines of the prevention of the unnecessary illness, which now fill our hospitals to a large extent? May better methods not attract to our profession a larger number of women of education and character who at present are discouraged from entering schools whose methods seem to them extravagant of time and discouraging to independence in thought and action? I am sure that this is the situation at present in the United States.

Examining our profession critically we must realise that even after an often rigid and wasteful "weeding out" of students, and a long period of instruction, many of our graduates have not developed qualities which make it possible for them to continue to grow in their profession and to contribute to the development of the art of nursing.

I am stressing these aspects of the results of our methods in nursing schools, not with any feeling of pessimism, nor with disrespect to the past and the present—but simply in recognition of the present day necessities in nursing. These necessities seem to me can only be met through methods of education which stimulate scientific reasoning in our pupils and satisfy a natural and desirable intellectual curiosity.

The method of teaching which I have been asked to discuss to-day is called, for want of some better term perhaps, the "case study method." Miss Harmer in her recent book, "Methods and Principles of Teaching the Principles and Practice of Nursing," describes this method as one which directs the student's whole study and attention upon the individual patient, and upon the nursing service to be rendered to that patient. It is a method which provides that the student in each phase of her nursing educational experience under careful instruction gives as complete care to each of her patients as she is capable of giving in her stage of knowledge.

It is opposed to the system by which the student learns nursing in separate procedures—for instance, taking temperatures, serving diets, keeping charts, filling water bottles, giving baths or portions of baths—during which period her knowledge of the nursing care required by each

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