

patient is limited to these duties of the ward machinery. At least if she has any further knowledge of the patients it is fragmentary and incidental.

The case method on the other hand provides an experience which may be considered the true unit of all nursing. It requires the same methods of observation and thought which should be applied to every nursing situation—with the patient as the centre of attention.

The result of this case type of study should be nurses whose habits of thought and action make it possible for them to provide for each patient as an individual and part of a unique social situation, such nursing assistance as he may require. This I conceive to be the basic aim of nursing education. It is an aim which includes thoughtful action—and is in opposition to an education which tends to limit the nurse's activities to skilful routine procedures in certain fixed institutional situations.

Considered in this light, the "case study method" may develop, not only the necessary powers of observation and reasoning in our students, but also other desirable qualifications of nursing such as adaptability, sympathy, knowledge of social and economic factors closely related to almost every health problem, and an appreciation of the mental factors which greatly affect the patient's condition.

So far we have spoken of the case study method in a somewhat theoretical manner. In discussing it further I shall have to illustrate by describing the ways in which the method is being applied in the course at the Yale University School of Nursing in the United States.

TRIAL OF THEORIES OF EXPERIENCED LEADERS.

In this school a number of the so-called "theories" of the most experienced leaders in nursing education are being tried out and developed. The school itself therefore may be considered an experiment in that it is bringing together for the first time a number of known and partially known elements in nursing education.

As a nursing school it is a part of the University. To obtain experience for its students the school co-operates with the hospital in making appointments to the Faculty of the school who are also given appointments in the nursing service of the hospital. In this way the school controls the nursing personnel of the hospital. The budgets of the school and hospital service are separate. This

makes it possible to provide for the nursing care of the patients in the hospital not only through student service, but also through a paid graduate staff who care for patients when and where it is not desirable to place students.

The educational programme in this school includes practical experience in a general hospital and its numerous outpatient departments, in a mental hospital, in a nursery school and with the New Haven Public Health Nursing Association. In each of these institutions somewhat different tools for applying the case method have had to be adopted. In each place there are different problems of supervision and administration of this service as it relates to the teaching programme.

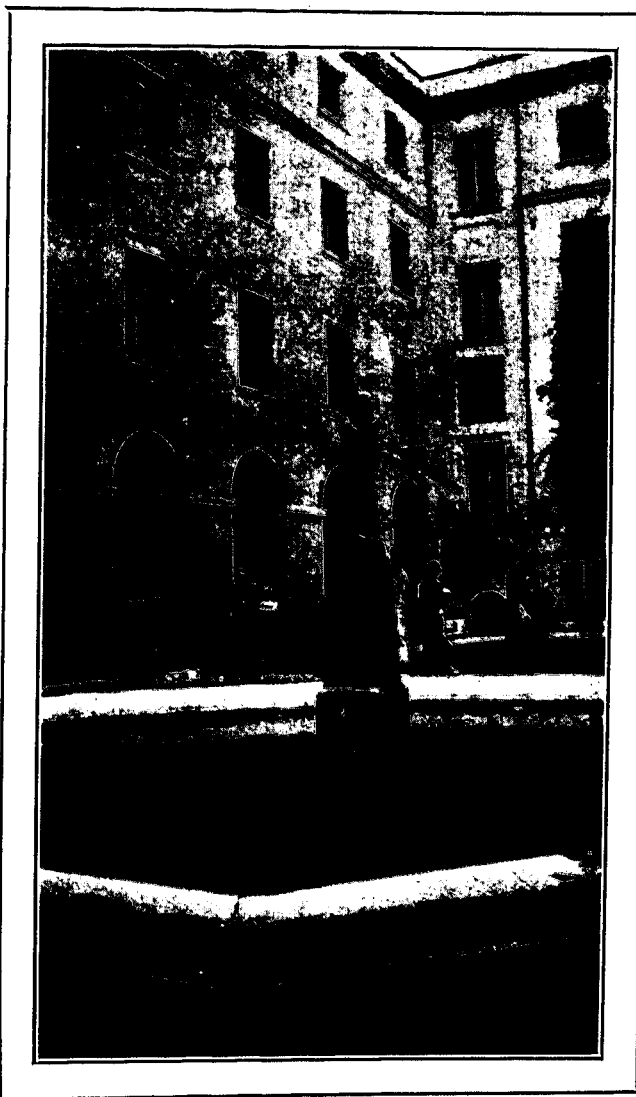
In the hospital, for instance, students are assigned to the various wards for a very definite and consecutive period of time. This enables the supervisor to plan the students' experiences in accordance with this time limitation. Once on the ward each student is assigned to a group of patients (from two to four usually) for whose nursing care she is generally responsible. During periods when she or other students or nurses are off duty patients are assigned for care according to these groups.

CASE EXPERIENCE RECORDS.

Daily each student records her experience in relation to the patients for whom she has cared on forms which she keeps for each patient. These forms are called "case experience sheets." All of these forms include such headings as patient's name, diagnosis (with dates), social factors relating to the health situation, medical treatments, nursing treatments and observations related to nursing treatments, including diet and the teaching of patient, bibliography (which may have been consulted in relation to the case), etc. The form for each hospital service, as the medical, surgical, pediatric, dietary has some additional special headings which

indicate to the student the most significant factors relating to the nursing needs in that service. The headings serve as a means of directing the student's attention to the important points to be observed.

This method of recording the case experience is exceedingly valuable, not only to the student in stimulating her to careful observation and study of her cases and to accurate methods of recording and evaluating her experience, but is invaluable to the supervisor in showing her actually the extent to which the student is correlating her



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