

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, REGISTERED NURSE.

No. 1,905.

APRIL, 1927.

Vol. LXXV

EDITORIAL.

DIPLOMA DAY.

The event of outstanding importance in the Nursing World this month is the ceremonial presentation of Diplomas to Fellows and Members of the British College of Nurses by the President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, F.B.C.N., in the Hoare Memorial Hall at the Church House, Westminster, on the 29th inst., for it will be an historic event of far-reaching importance.

With prayer and praise, and ceremonial beauty, the presentation will take place. The President and Council will for the first time appear in their academic Robes, emblematic of their study of, and training in, a special art, thus accentuating the meaning of the Diploma as a document conferring honour and privilege.

And indeed there is cause for thanksgiving. To meet the varying needs of the community, the examination of our ideals for the training of nurses is necessary from time to time. The basic principles remain, and it is noteworthy that with original genius the care of the healthy as well of the sick was included in Miss Nightingale's conception of the training of a nurse, as was also a knowledge of sanitary science. But it was a succeeding generation which visualised the need for an even wider sphere, that the nurse's training should begin during her school life, that her education should be directed to those studies which would help her in her chosen career, that her mental training should be extensive and well-balanced, so that eventually, when she enters a hospital for her specialized training in nursing it should naturally lead to a university diploma or degree. It is within the memory of older nurses that the avenues of work open to nurses 40 years ago were practically hospital and poor-law nursing, private nursing and district nursing. Now the field is almost unlimited in connection with Government Services under the Admiralty, the War Office, the Air Ministry, in prisons under the Home Office, overseas in connection with the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, in infectious and other special hospitals, as School Nurses, and in the Public Health Service. Midwifery, Mothercraft and Infant Welfare also attract a proportion of trained nurses.

Three years' hospital training, even if well organised, and utilised to its fullest extent, can but suffice to provide the basic training, and to reveal to the pupil-nurse the direction of her interest and aptitude.

It is reasonable to anticipate that, building on the foundation of the State Register, the next great advance in Nursing Education, of which an example may be found in connection with Teachers' College, New York, and elsewhere, women desiring to enter the Nursing

Profession will elect to take a course which will include (1) general cultural subjects which are considered fundamental in any College training, (2) professional training, (3) training in a special branch of nursing, the whole leading to a Nursing Diploma, and a degree of Bachelor of Science.

The British College of Nurses can foster such aspirations, can advise and assist those desiring to obtain them, and can institute courses of preliminary and post graduate teaching, which will be most helpful to those desiring post graduate instruction. There is at the present time an increasing number of nursing educationists for whom the foundation of the British College of Nurses holds out practicable possibilities in connection with nursing education, which hitherto have seemed illusive and visionary. Such will be among those to receive the Diploma on April 29th, a date which they will ever remember with thanksgiving. A new era once again opens for the Profession of Nursing. *Laus Deo.*

THE INTERIM CONFERENCE OF THE I.C.N.

Once again nurses from the world over are bidden to a Conference by the International Council of Nurses, to take place in Geneva in July next. It will be seen from the programme, which we publish on pages 90 and 91, that the Conference will include in its scope not only matters affecting the interests of nurses, but far wider issues. For centuries the work of nurses was performed under conditions almost conventual, their heritage from the days when nursing was mainly in the hands of the Religious Orders; and members of our profession were practically encouraged to believe that their outlook on life was bounded by the four walls within which they worked.

The modern nurse has a different conception of her duty. She is in many cases an enfranchised citizen and to exercise her vote aright it is necessary that she should acquaint herself with the world's problems. This point of view is reflected in the programme of the Geneva Conference which will be welcomed by a representative of the Council of the City of Geneva, as well as by representatives of the League of Nations, the International Labour Office, and the President of the International Red Cross Committee.

Visits will also be paid to the Headquarters of the League of Nations, and of the International Labour Office, and lectures on their work will be given, in each case by members of their staffs. At the same time the professional and the social side of the Conference—the latter always so enjoyable a feature of gatherings of the International Council of Nurses—will receive due emphasis, and we may be sure that the Headquarters of the International Council of Nurses, at 1, Place du Lac, will receive many visitors.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)