vision many years ago.* To see how, one after another, many of the reforms and advances which she envisaged, and for which she so vigorously strove, have been brought about.

A study of the past can tell us a good deal about how we have reached our present stage of growth and development, and it is easy to trace in various phrases of these, throughout the years, the ideas and efforts of those among our predecessors who were constantly searching for better ways, and constantly labouring to bring them into being.

We can almost as easily trace, too, the results in the present of those who have avoided all such effort. There is an old Latin proverb which says, "He who is silent consents." There are others, too, who, satisfied with existing conditions, have striven to preserve and perpetuate them. I do not, of course, need to mention that the latter is the more common point of view and that by far the larger number of people dislike change heartily, and will often work hard to prevent it. Quite familiar in our present is the old cry of Hezekiah, "Let not the evil come in my time, O Lord."

In trying to see what kind of a future is in the making for nursing and for nurses we shall need not only to know existing conditions but to know also something of conditions in the past, in order to understand the nature of the influences which have shaped the present. Let me pause here to say that while the subject in its elements is of the gravest importance in the development of nursing anywhere, I must necessarily limit my discussion to the conditions in the United States, with which I am most familiar.

A distinguished educator thus describes three successive stages of growth through which the professions usually pass. The first stage is *expansion*—more schools, more students—this makes inevitable the second stage, that of *standardisation*—set up standards and enforce them as far as you can. Then follows the period of *criticism* — the educational effort must justify itself by its results. Nursing is still expanding, still trying to create its standards and is very much engaged in critical study and analysis of its work and education system. But before there was any professional education, there was the still earlier stage of *apprenticeship*. This still exists widely in nursing though not elsewhere, and nursing is therefore peculiar in that it seems to be struggling along in all four stages of growth simultaneously.

The writer describes nursing aptly as an emerging profession—unquestionably professional on its highest level, but not completely so on its lowest.

For some obscure reason this picture of nursing affords me a good deal of satisfaction. Perhaps the fact that we are struggling along in all the stages at once may explain some of the surprising contradictions that appear whenever one attempts to show the progress of nursing. That substantial gains have been made in the education of nurses is evident when we compare the present with the past. It is only when we compare nursing educationally with the other professions that we see how far behind them we are in certain important ways, and what a vast amount of work is still ahead of us waiting to be done. One is impressed not more by what has been changed than by what has remained unchanged.

It is necessary, however, to remember that nursing is a calling in which tradition has always been a peculiarly powerful influence, richly stimulating in certain ways, but given to the forging of chains in others—as, for instance, in setting up poverty, obedience and self-immolation as ideals in themselves—and it is important also to keep steadily in mind that nursing is a work almost entirely performed by women, in most countries, and that advancement has not always been made easy for them.

Professor Nutting then drew the picture which nursing presents to-day.

Up to a recent period the only preparation available in most countries for any branch of nursing was that provided in hospital training schools, and this is still all that most nurses can obtain. There are, however, certain nursing schools conducted under independent auspices, of which noteworthy examples are found in France and Italy, but these are few in number.

After fifty years of continuous experiment with this educational system, we are, I think, in a position to come to some correct conclusions about it, to determine how far it is answering the needs of the present day.

The Chancellor of a prominent American University, in a recent discussion of the education of nurses, pointed out that nursing exhibits the only profession left in which the student is looked upon as a source of profit. Inherent in the system that permits this, lie almost measureless possibilities of exploiting student-nurses in the service of the hospital; the only check upon this must come from the conscience of the individuals directing their activities; the system itself provides none.

But people transcend the systems they create, and in the hands of women of exceptional ability, courage and devotion, and under the better and more generous type of hospital administration, schools of nursing have slowly been brought to a notable point of efficiency.

Gradually a new element has entered into the situation which has resulted in a co-operation between schools of nursing and other educational institutions, and has brought to the education of nurses certain necessary resources and facilities which hospitals could not provide.

Photo] [Montreal Daily Star.

MRS. SEKI HORA and MRS. FUMI YAMOZAKI
Two Charming Ladies from Japan.

* Mrs. Fenwick, to her sorrow, was unable to be present.

previous page next page