

PROFESSIONAL REVIEWS.

PATHFINDERS.*

A History of the Progress of Colored Graduated Nurses.

This book by Mrs. Adah B. Thoms, R.N., is one of unusual interest, and its name is happily chosen, for Mrs. Thoms, herself a colored nurse in the United States of America, tells how the graduate nurses of her race blazed the trail over hitherto untrodden ground and in spite of extraordinary difficulties, including racial prejudice and lack of funds for organising training schools for colored women, have made good, so that now there are over 75 Schools of Nursing willing to accept colored women as student nurses, and they have organised a National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, a Constitution, and formulated a Code of Ethics.

Mrs. Thoms, who is a graduate of the Lincoln Hospital, New York City, and was for eighteen years Assistant Superintendent of Nurses of that institution, has dedicated her book "to the colored graduate nurses of America."

In a preface Miss Lillian D. Wald, the well-known head of the Henry Street Settlement, New York, writes that "the moment is timely for presenting the story of the entrance of our colored colleagues into the profession of nursing, and the author is equipped with the natural and acquired gifts needed for the telling"

"In 1912 the International Council of Nurses met in Cologne, Germany, and to that Congress Mrs. Thoms was sent by the Board of Managers to represent the Lincoln Hospital, and describe its field of service and teaching (accompanied by another colored delegate), and it may not be unsuitable to dwell for a moment on the sincere and spontaneous admiration and regard that was shown by the European nurses and physicians to these two delegates. In a stately pageant arranged by the artistic Germans, representing the historic evolution of nursing, the two colored women were placed in the centre of the modern group as being the newest racial group to enter the nurse's calling.

"Mrs. Thoms' leadership is significant, not only for her own race but for those socially minded persons of every race who cherish high purposes and unselfish accomplishments that bring promise of better relationships between peoples."

In her introduction Mrs. Thoms states that "this short history of nursing is presented not only as a record of the

struggles and achievements of professional nurses, but also as a foundation stone in racial progress—for nurses have contributed much in the past to the advancement of the race, and if the scope of their activities is enlarged, they can render an even greater service in the future."

The Sacred Vocation of Nursing.

"Such material as we have assembled gives us a new conception of the sacred vocation of nursing. It is in the sacrifices of these early pathfinders that we see how real our life work is. Through studying the uphill struggles of the group against prejudices and misgivings the student of to-day learns to estimate the problems she will meet to-morrow. It is only from such perspective that we can guide our course in crucial times and show to the world that we are a part of the great army of consecrated

women who are working towards the highest standards of nursing efficiency."

The book is well arranged under the following headings: Early Pathfinders, The First Professional Nurse, Famous Schools and their Graduates, The Colored Red Cross Nurse and the World War, The Development of Colored Health Centres, Pathfinders in the Missionary Field, History of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, and A Glance at the Future.

"Nursing," says Mrs. Thoms, "is not a new rôle to colored women. They have played that part through the centuries. Before the days of hospitals and training schools children and adults of their own and other races were tenderly nursed by colored women. In sickness they were ready to give their last measure of devotion to those who came under their care, seeming to possess, because of their long years of oppression, a special quality of patience, understanding and vision. In health their optimistic outlook, their quietly stimulating disposition, and their unusual sense of humour as well as their natural ability to prepare food in attractive, nutritious ways made it possible for

them to surround others with a happy, wholesome environment. Indeed, their adaptability, their natural gifts of tact and gentleness, added to a soft manner, a sympathetic nature and an understanding born of suffering, endowed them with healing powers which are not surpassed."

"Aunt Harriet."

An outstanding contribution of the colored Civil War nurse was made by the nurse known to all as "Aunt Harriet."

"Harriet Tubman was born a slave on the Eastern shore of Maryland about 1823. From a child she was neglected and cruelly treated by a very hard master to



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