

always with prayers at 6.30 a.m. in our hospital chapel, then from 7 a.m. the daily routine starts, the student nurses going to their duties in the wards, and these new probationers to their classes in the School. This class proved to be an unusually good one. All these girls of 18 to 22 had lived through stern experiences of recent years and they seemed much more mature and earnest than similar groups of earlier years. They gave their minds to study with a will and seemed so happy to have the opportunity of taking up nursing training unrestricted, in this quiet oasis of the city, in a Christian atmosphere.

Every one rejoiced in the new building, with its space and light. Almost daily Miss Driver expressed her joy in the well-stocked cupboards of equipment available for the teaching of nursing technique. All the things we had dreamed of and planned for, at last, are ours for the School of Nursing in this new building.

Rev. Shen Wen Ching, who kindly gave the lectures on Sociology to the new class, said one day: "This fine, sunny lecture hall makes the teacher want to do his best, and the students find it a joy to work."

At the end of each week's work, a test paper was given and the teachers rejoiced to see the good work this class was doing. At the end of the eight weeks' course the class was ready to go to the wards for the trial period. Before they separated they entertained the staff one evening by giving a pageant of nursing history which was quite a success.

Many inspiring historical figures passed before us in the pageant. From Hygeia, the Greek goddess of Health, to St. Phoebe, Fabiola, the Roman Matron, St. John of Jerusalem, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, beautiful Jeanne Mance of Canada, on to the Kaiserswerth Deaconesses, then Florence Nightingale, to the present day nursing profession of China the pageant showed the Church's share in nursing up to the present day.

One was reminded of the story told of the death of Florence Nightingale. Someone said "the Lady with the Lamp is dead; the light has gone out." "No," was the reply, "that light hasn't failed; it is shining through every part of the world to-day," and here in China over 7,000 hands have taken up the light and are spreading it through this needy land.

Later on, after the trial period in the wards, came the longed-for day of the capping ceremony, when the new class wore their nurse's uniform for the first time, and they became student nurses, and no longer probationers. What excitement reigned in the nurses' residence, what discussions about new shoes and stockings, hair to be neatly trimmed, and frequent fitting on of the new uniforms in the hospital sewing room. When at last they were ready they looked as pleased as brides in wedding attire, their faces alight with joy. One girl, a member of the Anglican Church, whose father had lost his life in the invasion under tragic circumstances, and whose family was being assisted by the Church, asked if she might invite the Bishop to the capping ceremony. I pointed out to her that the Bishop was a very busy man, that the capping service was a small affair not like a graduation ceremony, and that when that day came we might hope he would honour the event with his presence. She demurred, however, and said: "Oh, I am sure the Bishop will come to see me get my cap."

On this being reported to the Bishop, he, with his usual kind understanding, said he would come, and to our pleasure took a share in the service. Lovely white flowers were sent to us to decorate the wee altar under the beautiful stained glass window in the hospital Chapel. These were placed in the new vases which, with a cross in the centre, had been presented to us by the same kind Bishop after the unveiling of the windows.

Rev. Shen Wen Ching gave a very challenging address at the service to the nurses, reminding them that just as our

Lord told his disciples that they should do greater things than He had done, so the nurses of China could do greater things for their country than Florence Nightingale had done for hers. Mrs. Claude Pickens, one of Hankow's missionary community, and daughter of the famous Dr. Zwemer, of Moslem missionary fame, charmingly pinned on the caps, and thus 30 new reinforcements were added to the Hankow United School of Nursing. Then two Head Nurses, one from the Union Hospital, and one from the Methodist Hospital, held a lighted candle from which the new students one by one came up and lighted her own candle in token that they were taking up the torch to carry into the future.

The Senior Nurses were so thrilled that they defied local restrictions and prepared strings of fire-crackers to congratulate the new juniors with, directly the benediction was announced and the nurses came out of Chapel. In their excitement they fired the crackers a moment too soon. The congregation were standing with heads bowed to hear the benediction when, instead, came a mighty roar of fireworks, and they had to remain standing with bent heads until the roar had died away and the speaker's voice could be heard. "The crackers have a hot heart and cannot wait," whispered the Bishop. When we filed out of the Chapel we found the nurses standing in a guard-of-honour style to greet the guests and receive congratulations.

One wondered why there was so much jubilation over this occasion. We have capping services year by year, and who will ever forget the heroic one that took place the night before the city fell when all around us the city was burning! The nurses of that occasion are now the senior class, expecting the final examinations at the end of this year. If that was our saddest and grimmest experience, surely the one this year was the most joyous and triumphant one we have had. It marked the end of the difficult and barren period through which the School and hospital had passed since the war began. Not only had we fully recovered, but God had given us unthought-of triumphs—our hospital was larger and had more beds than ever in its history; our new building was finished and opened free of debt; even in the midst of such distress, our depleted staff was now fully made up; and the evangelistic response to all the work was exceedingly encouraging. No wonder there was such a feeling of exhilaration and gratitude to God filling all our hearts.

In December came the annual examinations for the nurses, and our new lecture hall became the exam. centre for the city.

Four examiners came to assist and papers were sent to the country hospitals, some by post and some by personal messenger to places cut off from us by post.

A course of lectures was given on Professional Problems to the staff Nurses during the autumn, which they much appreciated. It helped to widen their horizon and reminded them that they are part of a growing profession which the present distress has made of greater importance to the national welfare.

The School of Nursing Board of Directors has continued to meet in spite of the fact that several of the members have gone to West China. The Chairman of the Board, who was the generous donor of most of the cost of the building, wrote to share in the joy of its completion and said: "It was surely God's leading that we should continue with the building in spite of air raids since it is now opened free of debt. Had we waited for peace the building that cost forty-three thousand dollars now would cost at least one hundred thousand dollars."

Friends may be interested to know that of the cost of forty-three thousand dollars, thirty thousand was given by Mr. Li Jui, the Chairman of the School Board, eleven thousand was raised by friends in China and abroad, and two thousand was given by the Methodist Missionary Society of London.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)