

of Nursing Education and Service, which has in the past half-century penetrated the conscience and fired the ambition of nurses throughout the world. Indeed, "Chicago" is written on our heart. Never was there so lovely a setting for any Exhibition. The magnificent buildings, around them their national gardens, and away through the marble peristyle the deep blue waters of Lake Michigan, an inland sea, tossing life-giving spray for miles beyond vision.

The Nursing Exhibition in the Women's Building, never surpassed, every exquisite item in which crossed the Atlantic from Britain, was under special patronage of Queen Victoria, who sent us a fine autographed portrait, which, in a place of honour, commanded the homage of the peoples of the world as they recognised Her Majesty.

At the Women's Congress from innumerable countries—there was just time before they passed on, to meet the inspirers of women's emancipation. There came Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony, Julia Ward Howe, and in her prime May Wright Sewell—the Founder of the International Council of Women—and lovely Bertha Honoré Potter Palmer, President of the Board. Memory reflects like a mirror—it seems but yesterday we were hand in hand. Of pioneer nurses a wonderful group attended, led by Isabel Hampton, pure Canadian, buoyant, full of grace, blue eyes sparkling as Michigan waters.

To have taken part in this historic gathering was indeed a privilege, and to be a founder of the National League of Nursing Education, U.S.A., which without doubt leads the aspirations of Nursing as a skilled profession throughout the world, is a Silver Lining indeed to the cloud of ignorance which at the moment obscures the soul of nursing in Great Britain.

We shall rise again, perhaps with renewed vigour, but sacrifice must come first.

## A QUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS.

By GLADYS M. HARDY, S.R.N.

Now that the first rumblings of criticism and approval on the Rushcliffe Scale of Salaries have died away, we are still confronted with the original problem of finding the right type of girls to fill our ever-increasing vacancies in the Nurse Training Schools.

In one respect the Rushcliffe outline has rather added to the difficulty, in that the long view of paying really good salaries to the larger proportion of trained Nurses (*i.e.*, the Ward Sisters) was not adopted. Still, there is plenty of time, and, we hope, good will, to remedy this state of affairs.

As regards the Student Nurses, with whom Lord Rushcliffe has been so generous (to the great expense of hospitals and country), no demand has been made for educational qualifications on entrance. This is a weighty and serious matter, for girls, on whom will fall a large share of responsibility for future National Health, must be fully equipped by a good basic education for these great responsibilities. Until we get the best available type of intelligent and well prepared girl future National Health is in jeopardy.

Widely conflicting views have already been expressed on this subject, but as yet no happy medium has been struck. Some demand university and academic status from intending candidates, others are content with school-leaving standards, or matriculation, and very few have any

concrete ideas about the type of elementary school candidates who so often present themselves and are accepted for training.

Without any hesitation, we should demand school leaving certificates or matriculation as a prerequisite from girls who have received a higher education. Such a standard denotes a fairly high level of intelligence in a subject. Candidates from elementary schools should be submitted to an intelligence test, and only be accepted if their intelligence quotient is normal or above. Which now brings me to the whole crux of the situation.

We need *intelligence* (*i.e.*, common-sense) in our aspirant nurses. Not necessarily *intellect*, but definitely a fairly good intelligence quotient. Intelligence or common-sense may be defined as the "swift ability of persons to adapt themselves to their ever-changing environment." Mental defectives lack this adaptability and have to be cared for by the intelligent community.

We have known for some time that intelligence can be measured as accurately as the amount of water in a vessel, and that reliable intelligence tests are almost infallible in their results. Intelligence has no bearing whatsoever on education (except that it will greatly benefit thereby); it is freely bestowed, and it must be sought for in the younger generation and given every possible encouragement when found.

Therefore, girls of poorer parents who have been unable to proceed to the secondary schools because of financial difficulties should be given equal opportunity with those of better educational attainments, providing their intelligence quotient is normal or above normal, and they can present evidence of good character, etc.

Those girls whose intelligence is below the normal level should be rejected. They cannot benefit by education, and therefore cannot make good and efficient nurses. Should the practice of taking the I.Q.s of intending candidates become general, and only those of normal abilities be accepted, then I am certain that the failures at the State examinations will disappear.

Having thus established a truly intelligent and efficient rank and file of Registered Nurses, then all the higher posts ought to be competitive, and the best type selected, regardless of origin or of pre-nursing education.

My opinion is that university status, excellent and much desired though it be, is not really necessary in all candidates, because nursing is very greatly a domestic and practical profession rather than academic. Definitely we must have a percentage of intellectuals, who will guide our ship of State and watch over the interests of Registered Nurses and protect them from exploitation and de-gradation. Matrons, too, ought to be quite as well educated and highly endowed in their own sphere as headmistresses.

One Matron under whom I have had the privilege of serving once remarked to me: "The three most necessary qualifications essential in nurses are 'common-sense, courtesy, and kindness,' in that order." And with her I am in entire agreement.

1820-1943.

Visiting the statue of Miss Florence Nightingale, in Waterloo Place, London, on her birthday, May 12th, we found one beautiful wreath of laurel, blue, yellow, and white irises, inscribed:—

"Nightingale Fund Training School for Nurses,  
St. Thomas' Hospital.

In memory of our Foundress, Florence Nightingale,  
From her past and present Probationers."

On this sunny May morning we watched our young men and women in uniform halt for a moment at the foot of the statue amidst the roar of London's traffic. Doubtless they realised the value of her beneficent example in war.

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