

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, REGISTERED NURSE.

No. 2124.

Vol. 93.

JULY, 1945.

Price Sevenpence.

EDITORIAL.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE.

On June 20th, the weekly issue of *The Medical Press and Circular* contained a special article on "The Future Training of Nurses" by Ernest C. Hadley, M.D., B.S.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.E., Examiner, General Nursing Council for England and Wales; late Medical Superintendent, surgeon, electrocardiologist, lecturer and examiner to Nurses, County General Hospital, Leicester, and approved Lecturer in Midwifery, Central Midwives Board.

It will be realised that this experienced medical man has the right through experience to form and express a valuable opinion on the nursing crisis, and it is with sincere appreciation that we Registered Nurses have read his expert opinion and with gratitude that at last a member of the medical profession realises the serious result of the de-grading of nursing standards and makes suggestions for reform—a policy which Dr. Hadley has for many years advocated in the hospital of which he was Medical Superintendent—to popularise the profession of nursing and render it more attractive and useful.

THE ASSISTANT NURSE.

To quote the article:—

"The recent recognition of a second grade of nurse is, in my opinion, one of the worst and most retrograde steps ever taken by the nursing profession since it became recognised as a profession, and I have not hesitated to express my views in the Nursing Press ever since it was mooted, and have received many letters from members of the nursing profession in support of my contention.

"I look upon this step as an ill-conceived emergency measure; unfortunately it is not introduced as a temporary expedient, but as a permanent policy to be perpetrated indefinitely."

Dr. Hadley then points out the factors which have brought about this *contretemps*, resulting in the great shortage of nurses and of recruits . . . which was in existence long before hostilities started. 2. The wrong methods of training nurses. 3. The revolt—or shall it be called the disinclination—of trained nurses to do real nursing that is involved in the nursing of an unsensational and non-glamorous kind (that involved in the nursing of helpless and chronic patients and those suffering from incurable or alleged incurable conditions), and their distaste for the performance of the unpleasant routine requirements of nursing. 5. The unnecessarily high standard of theoretical knowledge required by the General Nursing Council necessary for registration. 6. Objection to the

gross exploitation of their services when in training by being required to do in most hospitals all the routine work of the ward. 7. An unsatisfactory curriculum and type of training.

"The remedy resorted to by the nursing profession to counter these objections has been to recognise by enrolment a Grade 2 class of nurse to be officially called 'Assistant Nurse,' but who, of course, in practice will be called 'Nurse.'

"It does not seem difficult to demonstrate how wrong is this attempted solution of the difficulties, or how most, if not all, of them could have been overcome, not at once, but eventually."

Dr. Hadley proceeds in his inspiring article to discourse on "Stages of Training" and "Suggested Reforms." In his "Summary" he advises, with other details:—

1. Abolish the recognition of an inferior grade of nurse.
2. Better propaganda to encourage nursing to be selected as a desirable occupation.
3. Make "Student Nurse" so in reality, not merely in name.
4. Staff the wards of hospitals with "State Registered" nurses only.
5. Eliminate domestic and other types of work from the routine work of nurses.
6. Do not waste nurses by employing them on work that is not essentially nursing work, but appoint appropriate training personnel to do that work.
7. Allow trained nurses to live out [with this we do not agree], or, if living in hostel or nurses' home, to have a bed-sitting-room or, better, bedroom and sitting room should be provided, and a common room.
8. Discipline in hospital on duty is essential and should be strict, but freedom as in other walks of life must be possible.
9. That there should be one Register, and one only, for all kinds of nursing, including midwifery.

CONCLUSION.

"The future prosperity and attractiveness of nursing as a profession would be assured, I am confident," writes Dr. Hadley, "should the conditions above outlined be ensured."

We share Dr. Hadley's confidence on this matter, and, as a registered nurse, feel equally confident that if the present de-grading of nursing standards and the absolute autocracy of the Minister of Health is enforced, intelligent conscientious girls will avoid nursing as their life's work and the riff-raff will have the sick poor at their mercy.

ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

We are glad to know that Miss Isabel Macdonald, S.R.N., Secretary, Royal British Nurses' Association,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)