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ETHEL GORDON FENWICK, S.R.N., HON. EDITOR 1888—1947.

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Editorial.

The Essence of Good Nursing.

It is well in adopting any work in life to keep definitely in mind what we should aim at achieving thereby, and every probationer who enters our nurse training schools should be helped to realise the objects of the instruction she will there receive.

Primarily most girls enter upon a nursing career as a means of self-support, and it is a laudable object. But, when the decision has been taken, the aspirant for training must remember that she has chosen a career which, from some aspects is specially difficult, and requires special qualifications, natural and acquired. She will not have to deal with inanimate material which can be moulded at will, but with human beings, whose co-operation with her efforts for their welfare she must endeavour to secure, if the best results are to be obtained. She should therefore take every possible opportunity of studying human nature, for in the course of her work she will meet with humanity at its best and at its worst, and if she is to deal successfully with both, and with the large mass of people who come into neither of those categories, she must be a student, and a lover, of the human race, realising that it finds self-expression in a variety of forms, that "it takes all sorts to make a world," and that her sympathies should be wide enough to include them all. A real reverence for their humanity, whatever its outward manifestation, will be the greatest lever in her possession for raising it to a higher level in those instances where self-respect has been wounded, and she will be wise to adopt the poet's counsel :—

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
Though they may gang a kennin wrang,
To step aside is human.
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it !
And just as lamely can ya mark
How far, perhaps, they rue it.

So much for the general outlook of the nurse upon the human material. Her special attitude should be a passion for health as the birthright of every human being, and consequently, her fixed aim will be to aid in the prevention and cure of disease, in the relief of suffering, and the consolation of the sick and the dying.

In order that she may achieve these ends, she will set herself steadfastly to acquire knowledge, for the help that she will eventually bring to her patients will not be merely that of a person of good will, but of a trained and competent expert. That is what the public pay for, and have a right to expect. Ignorance in the untrained is to

be expected, in the trained it is unpardonable and dangerous. And with knowledge as a basis she will spare no pains to acquire professional skill, including the gentle touch, deft manipulation, alertness in the observation of symptoms, sureness and swiftness in dealing with critical situations and emergencies, so that her confidence is infectious, and the patient is comforted and tranquilised. Consider this as an asset in successfully dealing with a sudden case of hæmorrhage, and many similar instances could be given.

To conclude: the essence of good nursing is to surround the patient with an atmosphere of comfort and tranquility, and with competent care based on knowledge. No pains are too great to acquire dexterity in manipulation and in the art of healing both mind and body.

A Proud Heritage.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE Twickenham Women's Organisations Festival Exhibition, "Women of the Century—1851—1951" and held from June 25th to 30th, the British College of Nurses was happy to comply with the request for a picture of the pioneer of State Registration—Mrs. Bedford Fenwick—to be placed in the History of Nursing Section of this wonderful show.

Our interest thus aroused, found us at York House, Twickenham, feeling delighted to have taken the opportunity of visiting this most inspiring exhibition of pictures, books, and relics, and every phase of women's work and achievements for a hundred years. One simply walked into the atmosphere of those times—photographs and pictures of the women leaders and pioneers, poets and writers, an impressive array—which included those who played their part in the struggle for the franchise.

There were stands of dress fashions through the century—what was worn for tennis, cycling and croquet. Models of Victorian and Edwardian drawing-rooms, kitchens and nurseries.

An outstanding feature was the women's long fight for the vote and the fruits of its victory shown in the rapid advance of women into every trade and profession.

District Nursing and Midwifery were most realistic in many models—showing their wonderful advancement.

Arousing much admiration was a screen composed of one hundred appliqué embroidered squares, each recording an event of outstanding importance in the hundred years since 1851, beginning with the first Exhibition.

We felt this contribution to the Festival of Britain was a triumph of organisation and display.

The atmosphere of cultured serenity and character we felt, as if we stood in those unhurried times!

As one thinks of the earnest eyes and thoughtful brows of the women of the century, how grateful generations to come should be, that they blazed the trail! For we shall not see their like again!

We understand that so great was the response to the appeal for historical material that much more could have been exhibited had there been the space,
A. S. B.

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