

# HOSPITAL AND TRAINING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

IN CHARGE OF  
ALICE SHEPARD GILMAN, R.N.

## A CAMPAIGN FOR RECRUITING NURSES

BY CAROLYN E. GRAY, R.N.

The need of the right sort of publicity to bring the advantages offered by schools of nursing to the women of our country was the subject of earnest discussion at various meetings of the New York City League during the fall of 1919 and the winter of 1920. In every instance we were seemingly blocked by the fact that, like most things, and to a greater degree than many others, publicity costs money. As the date of Florence Nightingale's centennial drew near, we received many offers from those who were willing to help some form of publicity, provided we could outline a general plan, and coördinate the activities of various groups. This we were only too willing to do, but the great difficulty was that we had no one among our busy women free to formulate a comprehensive program, and no money to finance it. We were, however, glad to take advantage of the opportunity to coöperate with the State Charities Aid Association, the New York City Visiting Committee, and the Board of Managers of Bellevue Training School, in planning for a centennial dinner to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale.

These plans materialized on the evening of May 12, when six hundred guests sat down to dinner at the Hotel Biltmore. The speakers of the evening paid many glowing tributes to Florence Nightingale's life and work, and frankly discussed the great need for a very much larger number of student and graduate nurses than are available at present. All of the speeches were brilliant and inspiring, but the keynote was struck by Dr. Livingston Farrand, who stated that the Red Cross intended to launch a nation-wide campaign to recruit student nurses.

Shortly after this dinner, Homer Folks, executive officer of the New York County Chapter of the American Red Cross, asked the Advisory Committee of the League to submit a plan of campaign and a tentative budget to cover the same. The plan and the budget were submitted late in May, and while these were being considered, Mr. Folks authorized the League to secure a nurse executive to make a

<sup>1</sup> Read at a meeting of the New York State Nurses' Association, Albany, October 28, 1920.

survey and plan for such work as could be carried on during the summer and until such time as the plans of the Red Cross for nation-wide publicity were matured. We placed our request for a nurse executive before many superintendents, and are indebted to Anna C. Maxwell for sending us E. E. Pearce, a graduate of the Presbyterian Hospital in New York, who had served in France during the war, and who, by virtue of her varied experience, seemed well fitted for the proposed task. Miss Pearce sensed our problem promptly and set to work with an enthusiasm that has been a source of inspiration to all with whom she has worked, and which accounts in large measure for the degree of coöperation she has enlisted.

Her first work was to make a survey of the high schools, private schools, vacation camps of the Y. W. C. A., the Girl Scout camps, and private vacation camps.

Our desire was to secure as many opportunities as possible to make addresses on the life of Florence Nightingale and to illustrate these addresses by lantern slides, which were considered an interesting foundation on which to fashion a talk leading up to modern nursing. As our plans progressed we came to feel that in addition to the lantern slides, we needed some pictures of modern developments in nursing to enable us to show, in rather vivid fashion, the contrast, between what we are pleased to call, the old, and the new.

A careful search of moving pictures revealed six or seven films, each containing a few pictures which could be assembled in a composite illustrating various branches of the nursing profession. The Red Cross owns these films, excepting the one belonging to the National Organization for Public Health Nursing. Several of them were made during the war and were used for Red Cross propaganda, and contain vivid pictures of hospitals and of happenings in the lives of nurses. Mr. Waddell, chief of the Red Cross Bureau of Moving Pictures, was asked if it would be possible to use a part of the film, "In the Footsteps of Florence Nightingale," as foundation, and add to it valuable pictures from the other films, and Miss Crandall also was approached with a request that a few pictures from the film, "An Equal Chance," might be used.

At first this proposition was met with almost a refusal, but after reconsideration of the great need for excellent publicity matter, Mr. Waddell, representing the Red Cross, agreed to make the film as desired, and the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, through Miss Crandall, gave a splendid contribution of some of its pictures.

At various stages of this part of the work, certain members of the League approved the pictures selected, and upon completion of

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the film, Miss Noyes saw it and expressed herself as desirous of having it shown as a part of the National propaganda.

These pictures were not complete until the latter part of June, too late to show them in many of our high schools or private schools, because examinations were approaching and it was impossible to secure appointments. We turned at once to the executives of the Y. W. C. A., who, from the very first approach, have given our movement whole hearted support and sympathy. By a great piece of good luck, we were allowed to show our pictures at the Silver Bay Assembly, where they made a delightful impression.

These lantern slides and pictures have been used as a basis for talks on the advantages of nursing as a profession, and have been shown in the following camps:

Miss Morgan's vacation camp at Greenwood Lake. The pictures were shown in the Parish House to about 150 girls from the camp and 125 summer people.

In thirteen Y. W. C. A. camps:

Summit Lake Camp on Bear Mountain,—225 girls. The pictures were given in an old barn, with most of the girls seated on the floor. The introduction was given with much point and earnestness by Miss Joliffe, the director of the camp.

Camp "Quannacut," Bear Mountain,—100 girls. The living room was pressed into service. The girls were so closely seated on the floor that one spoke with an eye on the acetylene gas tank, notwithstanding the fact that a girl had been mounted guard each side of it.

Saddle River, New Jersey,—75 girls. Here also a barn was used as an assembly room and a number of neighbors came in to see the pictures.

Long Beach, New Haven, Conn.—75 girls. A very small living room, overcrowded, and the hall filled with neighbors.

Shadowbrook Camp, Cornwall, Conn.—100 girls, (and one boy). There was much excitement here, as this was the first entertainment of the summer.

Camp Altamont, New York,—225 girls. A most marvelous situation on the Heldeberg Hills,—an assembly room of splendid proportions; the Councillors here were especially keen and interested. The Councillors in each camp are a group of college women, of superior calibre. When the camp group consisted of quite young girls, there was always the satisfaction of having presented the opportunities of our profession to this group of college women.

Brantingham Lake, near Utica, N. Y.—100 girls, camp remotely situated on a lake, pictures given in the open air.

Tully Lake, near Syracuse, N. Y.—250 girls, a fine assembly room and splendid response.

Canandaigua, N. Y.—75 girls, intelligent group, intimate discussion after the pictures.

Camp "Magua," Poland, Maine,—250 girls, a perfect assembly room and marked response.

Camp Canton, Canton, Mass.—75 girls, pictures were given in the living room.

Camp Mckonikey, Martha's Vineyard, Mass.—50 girls, two girls in this camp had already seen the pictures and were splendid advance agents. The Councillors in this camp were especially responsive.

Summer School, Syracuse University,—about 200 were present; the lantern slides and moving pictures were given in Forestry Hall. Every possible coöperation was given by Dr. Petry, Dean of the Summer School. Excellent press notices were given in the three papers.

Here I may explain that in many of the camps there was no moving picture machine, and often no electricity, so Miss Pearce started off on these trips with a set of slides, a moving picture film, a portable lantern, and an acetylene gas tank, plus her own suit case, for this was all done during the summer season, often in intensely hot weather. No one will ever convince me that the spirit of our nursing pioneers is either dead or dying; on the contrary, I believe it is being translated in terms of new and different forms of service, and as justification for my belief I offer this picture of one of our members starting off in enervating summer weather laden down with all this paraphernalia, yet filled with an enthusiasm that difficulties seemed only to stimulate.

Summer days are delightfully long, and darkness falls late. In one assembly room there was no way provided to shut out the daylight that came in through a large window back of the platform. A search of the village stores yielded nothing, until the material used to cover the counters at night was discovered, borrowed, and tacked across the offending window to darken the room. Enterprising, you will say, and I agree heartily.

#### *Girl Scout Camps:*

Central Valley, N. Y.,—200 girls, the day on which the pictures were to be shown was a series of catastrophies, no acetylene gas being available in New York, the last train to Central Valley was missed in hopeless waiting for a supply promised from Bound Brook, New Jersey. Determined not to disappoint the girls, a train was taken to the station nearest Central Valley, only to alight in the face of a severe thunderstorm and to find no car from the Camp in waiting. The ascent up the mountain was made in a Ford car, pivoting on two wheels around slippery curves, chased by vivid lightning. The arrival at Camp was more than a reward, as several young girls called out: "We thought you weren't coming at all!" It took more than ordinary courage to admit that there was no gas with which to show the pictures; however, the inspiration of those young faces and the sympathy of the Councillors gave one a splendid start and the girls were as intent and silent as if they were being offered something quite thrilling. After the talk, the storm cleared and the singing of the girls followed one far down the hill.

A new Girl Scout Camp has been established at Dover, N. J. Though quite in the wilds, the clever Director had managed to produce comparative comfort and in spite of a rain storm the pictures were given in the canvas covered dining room and were a diversion as well as instruction. One hundred girls were present.

The moving pictures were shown at the Summer School of Teachers College,—about fifty nurses being present.

### *Three Private Camps:*

Camp "Hanout," Thetford, Vt.,—100 girls. It was through the courtesy of Professor Farnsworth of Columbia University that the pictures were shown at this camp. One cannot say too much of the spirit with which Professor and Mrs. Farnsworth have directed and inspired these girls. The pictures were shown in a large assembly room overlooking the lake and met with much appreciation.

Camp Aloha, Fairlee, Vt.,—150 girls. A number of interesting women give instruction in the various arts and crafts which distinguish this camp, and these formed an interested part of the audience. Mrs. Farnsworth made an approach to this camp possible. Mrs. Gulick, who conducts it, gave a charming introduction and Miss McMann, the nurse in charge, had given a happy foreword. To these must be given credit for the atmosphere and the response.

Camp "Wynona," Lake Morley, Vt.,—200 girls. Mrs. Gulick in turn gave introduction to Mrs. Osgood, the Director of Camp "Wynona." The girls offered splendid material and Mrs. Osgood and the Councillors expressed themselves as believing that the evening had been entirely worth while.

On several occasions it has been possible to speak to small groups assembled almost by accident as, for example, The Women's Club, Mount Washington, Md.; the Community Club, Morristown, N. J.; and the Red Cross at Bernardsville, N. J.

This brings our report to the closing of the camps and the opening of our regular schools. In passing we must record our appreciation of the cordial reception tendered our representative and the keen interest displayed by the director of the various camps. The following abstract from Miss Pearce's report to the Red Cross may serve as a resumé of the summer's work:

It has been a problem, one might say a game, to hold the attention of young people on a holiday and always at the close of a physically exhausting day, but the audiences have been attentive and have responded quickly to a turn of speech or story. They have asked intelligent questions and have admitted quite frankly that a new light had been thrown on schools of nursing and the vast opportunities offered by the profession. Many of the girls are too young to begin training at once, but they are interested and want to direct their education towards entering our schools. A number of letters have been received from prospective applicants and from mothers who were concerned to learn more about the profession in which their daughters had become interested.

Mr. Folks, in his address as presiding officer at the Biltmore dinner, stated that by far the most important remedy for the present shortage of student nurses was "*popular education* as to what trained nursing may be made to mean to the American people, and the great career of useful public service which it offers, (1) in the care of the sick, and (2) in the prevention of disease."

We feel that our publicity represents one form of "popular education," as the total number reached during the summer was approximately 6,000.

We are indebted to an endless number of people for the most

cordial coöperation. If time permitted, one would like to mention them all, but we must name the officers of the Young Women's Christian Association, who admitted us to their camps, and above all, the New York County Chapter of the Red Cross which has borne all the expense. Homer Folks, its executive officer, has proven a wonderful friend and has successfully presented and interpreted our cause to the Executive Committee of this Chapter.

At one time during the summer we were in great need of literature to leave at the Camps. In this emergency, the New York Branch of the Alumnae Association of Johns Hopkins Hospital sent us a check for \$15 to purchase a supply of the Florence Nightingale Centennial copies of *Opportunities in the Field of Nursing*. This same association intends during the winter to offer prizes for essays on the *Life of Florence Nightingale*, and for posters for our use. A fine and public spirited example, we hope that many other alumnae associations will follow suit.

It is most encouraging to be able to report that the work is to go on. A small committee with Anna C. Maxwell as chairman and representatives from the League, from the Red Cross, and from the Y. W. C. A. are formulating plans for a campaign of much greater scope, and hopes to enlist the services of a large committee to include representatives of hospital trustees, boards of lady managers, hospital superintendents, men and women of public spirit, and nursing leaders. With the backing of such a representative committee, we are hopeful that we may be able to carry out in full some of the suggestions contained in our original scheme.

A collection of printed material and press notices has been arranged by Miss Bowman of the Lenox Hill Hospital. Most of this has been incidental, as we have had no regular publicity expert to look after this part of our scheme, but here again we have been fortunate, for what finer type of publicity could we imagine than Dr. Finley's beautiful poem, "Florence Nightingale," written on May 12, 1920, and totally different, though equally appreciated, the nursing number of the State Charities Aid Association, and its wide distribution, for which we are indebted to Homer Folks. It is good to be a New York nurse in this centennial year, to have a Governor Smith to sign our bill, a Commissioner of Education dedicate a poem to us, a Dr. Downing always ready to help us, and a Homer Folks to interpret our problems so sympathetically that he is constantly making friends for us.