

social policy, if the necessary supply of skill is to be both forthcoming and readily available.

Then the service itself becomes increasingly technical, demanding an ever-growing degree of specialised training. Here is an issue that is disturbing us all, in almost every field of education today, and it is no exaggeration to say that the fate of society depends, in large measure, upon the wise solution of it. How are we to provide for the carrying of this ever-growing load of technical *expertise* and yet save and strengthen the human souls of men and women? A society consisting wholly or largely of "mere" experts: of people who are just experts and nothing more—what a horror to contemplate! Yet there seems to be some danger of it and the issue is nowhere more acute than in this field of the education of nurses.

Next, we may glance at the professionalising process which gathers such strength in so many callings, in addition to that of nursing. There can be no doubt that change in the ambitions and status of women has given a powerful impetus to the process, which again, is full of danger. What is the recognised standard of competence to be? How is it to be achieved and maintained? What rights is the organised profession to exercise? How can the dangers of privilege be offset so as to safeguard the community without injury to the profession? Here are momentous questions both of education and of social control, and parallels to them can be found on every hand.

Finally, I will take note of another unsolved conundrum that is illustrated by our topic. It is of a more purely educational character and so can be used to lead straight into the main discussion. It is a question at least as old as Plato, and his discussion of it in the "Republic" is still relevant to our own case. It is this: What is to be the relation of so-called general (or liberal) to so-called special (or vocational) education?

How will that relation, when determined, be expressed, both in the educational progression of the individual and in the varied provision of educational means that the community must offer? In particular—in the case of nursing education, for instance,—what kind and degree of "general" education shall be demanded as a qualification for entrance upon specialised training? And again—perhaps even more momentous—what guarantees of continued cultural development of a broad human mind can be associated with or derived from the specialised training itself?

I call this last question particularly momentous. Why? For many reasons, the nature of which I can illustrate briefly. Are we quite sure that a preliminary course of so-called "liberal" training, given in the usual way, and carried as far as you like, is in itself a sure guarantee against the narrowing and dehumanising influence of closely professional studies? Can we be quite sure that the "liberal" training has taken firm hold and that there will be no back-sliding? For an answer, look around on the world of successful professional people.

Again, is there any profession which requires, more than nursing, that its professional training shall itself be penetrated through and through with a rich and liberal human significance, so that the clinical thermometer and the compress become, in themselves, symbols of salvation of more than a physical kind? Can we afford to make the same cardinal mistake in the training of nurses that we made in the past in the training of teachers, where we gave the narrowest and most illiberal of trainings for what should be the broadest and most liberal of professions?

It is this need for a liberal handling of the technical training itself that constitutes a strong argument for associating at least the higher training of nurses with the university, provided always that the salt of the uni-

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