

SKETCH OF AN AMERICAN TRAINING SCHOOL.

AS an American subscriber and careful reader of the *Nursing Record*, I take much interest in the accounts given of the methods of work in your Hospitals, and have thought that it might be also a matter of interest to your English readers to hear something of the Boston Training School for Nurses, which was established in 1873, at Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

The Massachusetts General Hospital was founded early in this century by a private bequest, and is chiefly supported by legacies, donations, and annual subscriptions for free beds. It has thirteen wards, containing in all two hundred and fifty beds; a large Out-patient Department, and a Convalescent Home in the country, for thirty patients. The Hospital itself is under the charge of a Resident Physician, who takes the entire supervision of the establishment, and of six House Officers, who are appointed for a year and a-half. Six Physicians and six Surgeons form the Hospital Staff, the terms of service being four months. In addition to these are twelve Physicians, and six Surgeons on the Out-patient Staff.

The Training School consists of a Lady Superintendent, Night Superintendent, thirteen Head Nurses (in charge of Wards), who are generally graduates; and fifty-six Pupil Nurses. An applicant to the School, having answered satisfactorily all the questions of the Training School circular, serves a month's probation to test her strength and capability to learn; and this proving satisfactory, she signs an agreement to remain during the two years' course, receives her cap and uniform, and enters the School as Junior Nurse. There is no registry of Nurses connected with the Hospital, and we consider a two years' course sufficient for general Nursing, without keeping them too long in the routine of Hospital life. Each Ward is in charge of a Head Nurse, who has under her two or three Pupil Nurses, and a Ward Maid. The Nurses are appointed according to the size of the Wards; these varying from fifteen to twenty-one beds. The Head Nurse is responsible for the cleanliness of her Ward, furnishing supplies, faithful carrying out of Physician's orders, and practical teaching of the Pupil Nurses. The Senior Nurse takes the charge of a certain number of beds, and supplies all absences of the Head Nurse. The Junior Nurses take such patients as are assigned to them, and are responsible to the Head Nurse. Each Nurse in a Ward prepares and accompanies her patients to the Operating Room. There is a yearly course of

lectures, forty in number, extending from September till June, given by the Hospital Physicians and Surgeons, and abstracts of these lectures are written out by the Nurses and submitted for correction to a Physician. Demonstrations in anatomy, bandaging, and etherisation are given by the House Officers. Daily classes from a text-book, and "Quirres," are held by the Superintendent and Night Superintendent.

Each Nurse, during her two years, serves in periods from three to four months, including night service, in all the Wards of the Hospital—male and female; Surgical and Medical; Laparotomy Ward; Private Ward; treating patients of the class who will require her services when she leaves the Hospital; and in the Out-Patient Department.

There is an Asylum for the insane, under the same endowment as the Massachusetts General Hospital, and it is optional with the Nurses to take a third year in Nursing the insane.

The Hospital has no Maternity Ward connected with it, but there is in its vicinity a well-established Lying-in-Hospital, where a Nurse can be thoroughly trained in that branch by adding nine months to her course. Quarterly examinations are held by the Physicians connected with the Hospital. At the end of the two years' course, a diploma is given to the graduating Nurse, and if she wishes to practise her calling in Boston she places her name at the general Registry of Nurses. At this office a full registration is kept, with comments upon character, so that anyone engaging a Nurse can form a fair idea of her fitness for the case she is to attend.

The Board of Directors of the Training School reserve to themselves the right to dismiss any Nurse whom they think unfit for her calling; or if the objections to her are not of a serious nature, she may be advised to resign.

I have not entered upon the various Hospital rules connected with the running of a Ward, such as hours of service and of meals, exercise and recreation, for I judge in reading your magazine that such an account would be too much of a repetition to have any special interest.

Private generosity has given us a Nurses' Home, which has added much to their health and comfort. Separate rooms, giving each Nurse some sense of a place where she can have her own belongings about her; and a large, comfortable parlour, with a library of some hundreds of useful and interesting books, tend to make the hours off duty an actual relaxation.

It will be very agreeable to me if this sketch of our Boston Training School shall show that there is an international sympathy of work between English and American Nurses.

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