

Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

QUARTERLY COURT.

The Discussion upon the Report which we published in our last issue is briefly epitomised below, and we comment upon this important matter in our Editorial column this week :—

Dr. Besant, in proposing the adoption of the Report, remarked that, of course, the primary object of a Hospital was to cure all diseases and alleviate all human suffering, whether through disease or accident; but another function arose incidentally, as it were, and that was the training of Nurses. They would see from the Report that in most large Hospitals the practice was to give Probationers three years' training; at Addenbrooke's they only gave two years' training. It seemed to him that a change from a two years' to a three years' course was really imperative.

Dr. Latham said he had great pleasure to second the proposition. The recommendations were very important, and he believed if they were not adopted it would involve a very serious loss indeed to the Hospital. The Hospital was under a great obligation to the Matron for the way in which she had developed the training of Probationers in the Hospital. The reputation of those Probationers was well established throughout the Kingdom. Under the present system, Probationers were at Addenbrooke's Hospital for two years' training; but, as they found in the report before them, it was absolutely necessary for the effective training of a Nurse that she should have, instead of two years, three complete years of probation; unless she had three years' training, she could not obtain a certificate as a Nurse. That was the point. Unless they altered the regulations so that Nurses should receive three years' training, they would have no further applications except from those who were going in for amateur Nursing, and those were not the class of Nurses that they particularly wished to have in that Hospital. [Applause.]

Dr. MacAlister, in supporting the motion, stated that a feeling had grown up in the country that three years was the very lowest term for which a certificate of complete training should be given to any Nurse. They stood to lose very seriously unless they moved with the times.

The Rev. H. Hall said that in 1878 they began the system of Probationers, and it had grown and grown until it was now a great and important school. But they were threatened with its destruction. He thought they must be quite aware of that. They could not stand still. The world had moved fast—faster than they had—and if they did not move with the world they must be left behind. The Nursing world was making that demand, and if they did not give their Nurses the power of obtaining certificates and of being registered, they were thrown out of the world, and were quite unable to obtain the best positions. If, therefore, they did not make a move they might be quite sure that those who were anxious to obtain good positions hereafter would go to other training schools, and their numbers would sooner or later be rapidly

reduced. He had calculated as far as possible the advantage which the Hospital derived from that system of training Nurses. The fees that they received from Probationers exceeded their cost, he thought, by about £5 or £6 a year. He did not think that that was any great excess to be received; they gave them training and the Probationers gave them their services. They understood that the present Probationers could only be replaced by twenty trained Nurses. A trained Nurse would cost at the very least £46 per year, and, therefore, if they multiplied £46 by 20 they had more than £900 a year. So that the Probationer system was giving to the Hospital certainly more than £1,000 every year. Now were they to put that in jeopardy? If they did, the Hospital would be in a terrible financial position.

The Rev. E. G. Wood stated that he was still unpersuaded of the wisdom of the proposal which was put before them. He felt that the Court was invited to take what he could only describe as a leap in the dark. He had not one word to say against the three years' system in itself. He would tell them why that was a leap in the dark. They were told in the report that 57 provincial Hospitals had adopted the three years' system. Good. But they were not told how many had adopted the system which they were asked to adopt, namely, that Probationers were not to be paid by the Hospital, but they were themselves to pay. It was one thing to pay for one year, and another for three years. He submitted that they had no evidence that a three years' system as proposed by the Report had been successfully adopted. He thought the very least they required from the Committee was that they should afford them a proof that that system would succeed; otherwise he was justified in describing it as a leap in the dark. He moved as an amendment:—"That the Report be referred back, and that the Committee be requested to further consider and report upon the proposals contained in recommendations 1 and 4, and that Mr. Cockerell, Dr. Waraker, Mr. Hamblin Smith, and Mr. G. A. Matthew be added to the Committee."

Mr. Cockerell seconded the amendment on the ground that sufficient time had not been given to the Governors as a body to consider the recommendations of the Committee. They should not rush at conclusions upon that subject. He felt himself they rushed very much at the conclusion they came to, to extend the time from one to two years; and now when a much more important alteration was proposed, which meant, as Mr. Wood said, an absolute revolution, surely it was advisable to take time before they adopted it. A great deal had been said about the importance of the Nursing branch of the Institution, but he felt—and many others felt—that the primary object of the Hospital was to cure diseases and to remedy accidents from which the patients were suffering. He could not but feel that what ought to be the primary object was gradually sinking into a third place. In the minds of many people the Hospital was to become a Nursing Institution, then they were to have medical examinations, and the care and the welfare of the Hospital was merely to be considered in the third place. He for one did not subscribe two guineas for the support of any Nursing Institution whatever; if he wanted to do that, he would subscribe to the Nursing Institution in London.

Dr. Cooper supported the amendment, and said the report contained a considerable amount of matter

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