

hardly two of the many examining bodies maintained the same course of study, or the same examining requirements. Consequently, the course and results of study varied immensely in different parts of the kingdom, and in fact there was, fifty years ago, no uniform standard or curriculum of medical education. With the formation of the General Medical Council, and the powerful authority conferred upon that body, in consequence of its control of medical registration, some degree of uniformity became almost immediately enforced, and now is universal. First, the necessary term of training was decided upon and has since been steadily raised. Then, the subjects of study which were made necessary at any examining body before the Council would recognise the diploma which it issued, as qualifying for registration, became firmly established. So, at the present time, there is practically a universally adopted curriculum of education in medicine and its collateral sciences which it is necessary that every student shall pass through before he can become a registered medical man. In like manner, we apprehend that it will become necessary, as soon as an Act of Parliament is passed enforcing the Registration of Nurses—and most people now recognise that it is only a question of time when such legislation will take place, and that present events are doing much to hasten it forward—that, first, the period of training, then, the subjects of study, and, finally, a distinct course of education, will be made uniform throughout the Nurse Training Schools of the United Kingdom.

So far then as analogy teaches, the course of events in the Nursing world may be fairly and easily predicted. It is when we come to the details of the system which may be enforced in the future that we find once more the great differences which exist between medical and Nursing education, and that another example is provided of the difficulties of establishing a uniform curriculum of Nursing education. We take it, however, for granted that by the time legislation is effected the rapidly-growing professional feeling in favour of the three years' standard of training will have become so nearly universal that this standard will be at once adopted, as the irreducible minimum of Hospital training through which every woman must pass before she can receive any authority to term herself, or to be registered as, a thoroughly trained Nurse.

With regard to the subjects of education there will be little dispute that elementary Anatomy, elementary Physiology, Hygiene and practical Nursing details, such as bed-making, bandaging, and so forth, are primary and essential parts of Nursing education; and we believe, as

we have frequently said before, and as we are glad to observe several Hospitals have accepted already in principle, that the knowledge of these subjects which is necessary to fit the Probationer to fulfil the duties required from her, will be demanded from her before she enters upon the actual practical Nursing of the patients in Hospital wards.

In other words, we believe that, when the curriculum of study for Nurses is finally defined, Probationers will be required to pass through a Collegiate course of study, followed by examination as a test of the knowledge which they have acquired in these preliminary subjects; just as medical students are required, before they enter on the practical part of their studies, to spend eighteen months in attendance upon such courses of elementary instruction in the various medical colleges. If this principle be accepted, the practical ward work which would follow would be defined with comparative ease, and it is certain that the Nurse who had acquired her theoretical knowledge before her admission as a Probationer into a Hospital would be better able in every way not only to learn her practical duties, but would also be enabled to attend more efficiently upon the sick in the Hospital wards.

HOSPITAL ABUSE.

THERE is a very growing feeling of indignation amongst medical men at the present time concerning the flagrant manner in which Hospitals are abused by better class people. It is needless to point out that the medical charities were established and are maintained for the benefit of the sick poor; and the eminent physicians and surgeons who are attached to these Institutions, and who give their invaluable services gratuitously to the patients, very naturally complain if their assistance is obtained under false pretences by persons who are by no means entitled to claim charitable aid. The matter is still more important to those medical men whose patients, although well able to afford proper attendance in their own homes, thus attend at Hospitals. In fact the question is now being raised whether medical men are wise to treat gratuitous patients at all, and it is pointed out with much force that no other professional men give their time and skill without fee or reward, as medical men so generously do. The question has been carefully discussed in Dublin, and it has been shown from reliable statistics that in 1893, out of a population of about 360,000, no less than 171,000 received gratuitous medical assistance. It certainly affords room for serious comment if 48 persons out of every 100 thus obtain charitable aid from the medical profession, and though it is not probable that the same ratio holds elsewhere, the figures at any rate are sufficiently surprising to draw public attention to the wonderful benevolence exhibited by the medical profession, and to make medical men question the advisability of doing so much gratuitous labour.

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