

Training School, and to her uninformed mind all schools are alike, the most important point often being in which she will get the longest time off duty, where she will secure a certificate after the shortest term of training, and where she will receive the largest amount of pay—just the three least important points. She makes no inquiry into the efficiency of the training, or what teaching she will receive, or if there is any necessary preparation. She applies haphazard, and very often, at the end of two or more years' training, finds it necessary to begin another term of training at a better school.

In former days candidates presented themselves to the Matron of a Hospital, who was supposed to be a sort of inferior kind of Providence, able in one interview, lasting at longest about fifteen to twenty-five minutes, to discriminate between the fit and the unfit. No wonder that a very large number of women, sometimes as many as 50 per cent., were sent away after a month's trial, bringing on the Hospital and on the unfortunate candidates three great evils. First, the patients had a very large and quite unnecessary number of ignorant and inefficient persons to wait on them; secondly, it necessitated a considerable and quite unprofitable outlay of money to board and lodge these inadequate people; and thirdly, it inflicted needless humiliation on the unlucky candidates. The first need of a Training School is, I take it, an efficient and adequate method of selection of Probationers from among the medley of candidates who present themselves. No method of selection can ever be quite good. We live in a world where perfection is not, but a certain measure of efficiency may be attained, more particularly when we are fully assured of what we want. There are, I need not tell you, very many qualities needed to make the really good Nurse, the possession of the majority of which can only be proved by considerable experience; but there are three which are so necessary that the authorities of the Training School should take some trouble to learn that the candidates possess them. They are *health, intelligence, and earnestness*. For the first, health, the candidate should be carefully examined by a physician attached to the School. For the second, intelligence, she may undergo both a written and *viva voce* examination by the before-mentioned physician and the Matron; and the third, *earnestness*, may be inferred by observing the amount of trouble she takes to enter on her training and prepare for her examination. This, then, is the second point, that a qualified medical man, appointed by the authorities of the Hospital, should be associated with the Matron in the selection of the Probationers.

I take it that the great question of the day,

as regards the selection of Probationers, is, what amount of preparation is necessary before the candidate enters on her duties in the wards of the Hospital in which, and in connection with which, her real training can only be done? Mrs. Strong, Matron of the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow, was the pioneer of this movement for preparatory education. She laid down and carried out, with the assistance of the medical and surgical staff of the Hospital, an elaborate scheme for the instruction of candidates, followed by an examination which had to be satisfactorily passed before the candidate could enter the service of the Hospital. One or two Hospitals have followed this lead in its entirety, notably the London, and some others in a modified manner. The reasonableness of the scheme is patent to all. The Probationer who enters the service of the Hospital with a sufficient knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and who has been taught how to handle a broom, and pad a splint, is no doubt very desirable. But it is a depressing truth that with every new system, no matter what its advantages are, we lose something that was good in the old. We must remember that a little knowledge puffeth up, and, however well taught, the candidate's knowledge must be superficial. It has been whispered to me that such Probationers are apt to be a little bumptious, and that the old meekness which characterised the new Probationer, and arose chiefly from a much-felt ignorance, is disappearing. Please do not misunderstand me. I have no experience of this system in its entirety, and I have found our much modified method of a preliminary examination a very great help, enabling us to be more sure of the health, intelligence, and earnestness of our candidates. This plan of selection is, however, only in its infancy, and whatever we may think of it we can only speak of it tentatively. It brings us, however, to another point in the Training School, and that is that some amount of preparation is necessary before the candidate enters the Training School.

Then comes the period of trial, which should not be less than three months. A mere month is futile, it can tell us nothing about the candidate. Another selection, however, may be made at the end of three months' work in the ward. The Matron's report, and the physician's observations on the effect of the work on the candidate's health, having been favourable, she may be recommended as suitable to be appointed Probationer. If not, she will be asked to leave the service of the Hospital. This gives us another point—the need of weeding the staff.

After the careful selection, preparation, and weeding of candidates, and equal in importance, are the teachers of the Probationers during their

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