

term of training—these usually are a physician, a surgeon, the Matron, and the Sisters of the wards, the last, the Sisters, being the most important. In their hands lies the efficiency or inefficiency of the Nursing Staff, because it is the Sisters alone who can teach Nurses the practical part of what is principally a practical profession. If they are only partially-trained, inexperienced women, how can they train Probationers? If, however, they are, as they ought to be, carefully trained, carefully watched, carefully selected, with a full knowledge of their responsibilities, then the Training School may indeed be expected to prosper. What training do those Sisters, who are the cream of the Training School, need? At least *three* years' careful training and experience, *passing* during that time at least two examinations creditably, and showing in other ways that they are fit for so great a responsibility. But that is not enough. Having gained their certificate, and the Matron feeling that such a one may be suitable for promotion, the next step is to give her authority and teach her how to use it. This must be done under competent supervision. She ought to do what holiday work the Matron can give her, and such duties as that of temporary Night Superintendent, or Matron Secretary, which gives the Matron the opportunity of deciding more leisurely that she is right in her estimation of the Nurse's character and abilities. She may then have three months' training in housekeeping and the care of the linen by the Housekeeper; and when a vacancy occurs she may be appointed Night Superintendent. This post she should hold at least a year, during which time she should have some experience in teaching, such as holding weekly classes for the junior Probationers; and, if possible, she should hold the post of Matron Secretary for six months at least. If, in all these posts, the Matron is satisfied with her, she may then be recommended to the authority as fit for appointment as Sister.

To do all this the candidate must have been at least four and a half years in the service of the Hospital, during the first three of which she has learnt to practice her profession and gained experience; during the rest of the time she has been taught to take authority wisely; she has met on more equal terms the principal officers, has learnt to know and trust them, as they have learnt to know and trust her. She has also got to know something of the administration of the Hospital, its aims and its methods; has been most carefully observed by the Matron, during the daily intercourse of a year and a half, as Night Superintendent and Secretary. She is now no inexperienced woman, whose appointment may or may not be a success, but one

whom the Matron recommends to the authorities with the utmost confidence as a person in whose hands authority and responsibility may be safely trusted, and who is able to instruct the Probationers both by precept and example. The extraordinary habit of appointing Sisters at the end of a year's training, or even immediately after two or even three years' training, is, I affirm, the weak point in very many Training Schools. They are hurried from a state of pupilage to that of authority, with no training in authority and no intermediate state. What wonder that we hear of the Sisters abusing authority, or of the Hospital withdrawing authority from the Sister? This brings out another point of importance to the Training School, that instruction should only be given by *experts* on each subject. The important teaching of the actual Nursing must be given by expert and experienced Sisters; anatomy, physiology, their practical application, and such amount of Pathology as may help the Nurse to understand why she does such or such things, and the *paramount importance* of absolute obedience, by a physician and surgeon alternately. Classes may also be held on practical and theoretic Nursing, by the Matron, or one of her assistants, who ought all to be trained Nurses. But no teaching should be done by *anyone on any* subject that she is not fully acquainted with. Nurses may be helped to prepare for the lectures, or helped afterwards to understand them; but no real teaching of anatomy or physiology should be done by anyone who is not fully qualified.

The next important point is the distribution of this teaching. The candidates, having had some preparation, which includes some slight knowledge of anatomy and physiology, enters the Hospital, and are sent to the wards. During their first year they will have plenty to do to master the technical parts of their profession, and in this they may be helped by classes on the theory and practice of Nursing by the Matron or her assistant. This is enough to make the first year very busy and fully occupied, at the close of which there should be a very practical examination, so that those who have not sufficiently profited may be referred back for six months, or, if not thought desirable, may be asked to leave the service of the Hospital. This, you see, makes a second opportunity for weeding the staff. Having conquered the technicalities, the next two years may be spent in gaining that experience which only a close observation of the sick and constant attention to their needs, under, of course, trained supervision, can give; and now the Probationer may with profit attend courses of lectures, by a physician and surgeon alternately, who will point out the causes and

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