

The American Nursing World.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF SUPERINTENDENTS
OF TRAINING SCHOOLS.*Discussion on the Three Years' Course.*

(Continued from page 356.)

MISS BANFIELD (con.). The following memorial was drawn up and sent to the College of Physicians, and to the Philadelphia County Medical Society, receiving twenty signatures of Superintendents of Training Schools within three days.

A MEMORIAL TO THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

"The undersigned Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses desire to direct the attention of the medical profession of Philadelphia to a 'Philadelphia Nurse Supply Association,' which has recently been set on foot in this city, and which they consider fraught with much evil to the nursing profession as well as to physicians and their patients.

This organization has for its object the education of women as nurses during a course of but ten weeks' duration, and practically of an entirely didactic character. The ostensible reason for this short course of nursing, is that a class of women may be established with training sufficient to enable them to act as nurses to those unable to pay the fees to which trained nurses are entitled. It will be noticed, however, that at the completion of this ten weeks' course 'a handsome diploma signed by the officers, and bearing the great seal of the corporation' is given its pupils. The circular of the association also states, 'We shall do what we can in assisting our pupils to the choice positions. . . . Anyone needing attendants for the sick will do well to communicate with us.'

The course of instruction given includes "the management of contagious diseases, dressing of wounds, bed making and bathing of helpless patients, massage and electricity, administration of enemata, kinds, methods of preparation, care of appliances, douches, external applications, cups, leeches, etc.; cooking and serving for the sick, how to make accurate observations and records of temperature, pulse, respiration, state of the secretions, expectorations, skin, appetite, breathing, sleep, delirium, stupor, condition of wounds, eruptions, effects of diet, stimulants, and medicines, the care of children, practical hints on railroad and ocean travel, care of convalescents, *personal hygiene, manicuring, facial massage, hints on health and beauty.*" It is stated that pupils are assigned to obstetrical cases, for which application should be made at the beginning of the term.

We wish also to direct the attention of the College of Physicians to the fact, that some of its individual members have, by giving lectures and permitting their names to appear in circulars and press notices, countenanced this scheme, and we would respectfully request that some action be taken by the College of Physicians, which will actively express its disapproval of such support being given. Serious injustice is being done to the qualified trained nurse not only by the support of such schemes, but also by the employment

of women who have been dismissed from training schools for cause.

Many superintendents of training schools, alumnæ societies, and others, are working early and late, in season and out of season, to render their work and that of others thoroughly competent and in every way, and under all circumstances, worthy of the name of a profession. To this end the term of training in the greater number of schools of good repute has been increased to three years. The term of probation to two, three or six months. Every effort is being made to secure for training as nurses women of high character, and those who fall below the required standard are dropped from our rolls. But many of these are employed by individual members of the College of Physicians, and are in consequence regarded by the public as members of the nursing profession.

We would earnestly urge our request that the College co-operate with us in our efforts to maintain and raise the standard of nursing, by agreeing to individually recognise as trained nurses for the sick only such women as have successfully completed the course of training and study required in the recognised training schools, and by discountenancing such associations as the above."

Since submitting this, two distinct statements have been made to me by gentlemen connected with this scheme of "Nurse" supply.

1. That these lectures were, and are, intended for "poor mothers," who will receive valuable hints on the care of their families and the bringing up of children.

2. That these lectures are intended for young society women who wish to employ their time and gain instruction in home nursing.

Of course both these objects are in themselves laudable, although it would seem to the casual observer that "manicuring, facial massage; hints on railroad and ocean travel," etc., would be more suitable to the latter than to the former class. Those of us who have given talks on home nursing, know how difficult it is to make what we say practical and useful with the limited means at the disposal of our hearers, and how easy it is to talk above the heads of our audience. But be that as it may, it would seem that in either case "a diploma signed by the officers and bearing the great seal of the corporation," costing \$10, would not only be unnecessary but actually misleading.

The main point to which I wish to draw your attention, is, however, the fact that both these statements are distinctly at variance with those put forth in the circular. Granted the aphorism of doubtful truth, that a little knowledge of medicine and nursing—a very little!—is better than none, for the "poor mothers" and the society girl, you will note that the circular appeals primarily to neither of these, but states that "The course offers to women an honourable means of livelihood, and places trained" (*trained, mind you*), "assistance within reach of

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