

## The London Hospitals and the Maintenance of Medical Education.

It will be remembered that the Prince of Wales, as President of King Edward's Hospital Fund, appointed a Committee, consisting of Sir Edward Fry, the Bishop of Stepney, and Lord Welby, to inquire—

1. Whether any, and if any how much, money given or subscribed for the relief of the sick poor to the twelve London hospitals having medical schools, is contributed, directly or indirectly, by those hospitals, or any of them, for the maintenance of medical education.

2. Whether any direct or indirect return for such contributions (if any) is received by the hospitals from their medical schools, and, if so, whether such return is equivalent to the amount of the contributions.

3. Whether, in the event of the committee finding that any hospital contributes to its medical school a sum in excess of the return it receives from the medical school, there are any special considerations advanced in justification of such expenditure, or any general considerations which would apply to all hospitals having medical schools.

The Committee found that in the cases of King's College Hospital and University College Hospital, no money given or subscribed to those hospitals was in the year 1903 (the last for which the accounts are completed) contributed, directly or indirectly, by the hospitals for the support of medical education. In the cases of Guy's Hospital and the Royal Free Hospital, the Committee doubt whether the schools can be considered as deriving any pecuniary benefit from the hospitals.

In the case of all the other hospitals, namely, Charing Cross, the London, the Middlesex, St. Bartholomew's, St. George's, St. Mary's, St. Thomas's, and the Westminster, they report that, in their judgment, contributions, either direct or indirect or both, were made in the year 1903, to the schools out of the funds of the hospitals.

Amongst the conclusions of the Committee are the following:—

"We think that the publicity which attends the work of a hospital where there is a body of young men in attendance also tends to maintain at a high level the whole work of the institution.

"It has been urged before us that the great amount of work done without payment, or with inadequate payment, by students, in the character of medical clerks and dressers, and in connection with the out-patients and the casualty cases, constitutes a pecuniary advantage received by the hospital from the school; but the evidence satisfies us that the expenses incurred in hospitals with schools are generally in excess of those in hospitals without schools, and we are of opinion that no saving of expense can be attributed to the presence of medical students. On the contrary, some of the evidence before us, together with a study of the accounts of the various hospitals, has brought to our attention remarkable variations in the expenses incurred by the several hospitals, and raises the important question whether, in the case of some of the hospitals to which schools are attached, there is not considerable extravagance and waste in the expenditure.

"With regard to the welfare of the patients, this depends so largely on the character of the individual medical men and nurses concerned with each case that it is difficult to draw any line between the two classes of hospitals. Probably, in cases of great obscurity and difficulty, the presence of a large number of students may at times be useful; but on the other hand, we think that the quiet of a hospital without students must often be a comfort to patients, and on the whole we do not think that the hospitals with schools can substantiate any superiority, in this respect, over other hospitals.

"The schools confer certain considerable benefits on the hospitals, and the hospitals confer on the students a very great benefit, because without admission to such institutions the students could obtain little or no clinical teaching. These mutual benefits may, the committee think, be fairly set off the one against the other. If that be done it follows that in the case of the schools which last year received benefits in money or money's worth from the hospitals over and above the benefits last alluded to, there is no return made by the schools to the hospitals which can be treated as recouping this expenditure of the hospitals, and that the schools still remain debtors to the hospitals in respect of these pecuniary contributions."

For the future the Committee proposes that the distinction between the hospital and the school should in every case be drawn, not only definitely and exactly, but with such clearness that it may be understood by the general public, and so that no question may arise as to the destination and application of moneys contributed; whether by the King's Fund or from any other source. This is a conclusion which will be welcomed by all sections of the community, and should have the effect of clearly defining the position of the medical schools and their needs, and of attracting the financial support of those interested in medical education, and, at the same time, of stimulating contributions to the hospitals by ensuring that funds subscribed for the relief of the sick poor will not be diverted to the support of medical education.

## New Preparations, Inventions, &c.

### VIRNOT VEILING.

We should advise all nurses, whose uniform bonnets have veils attached, to write without delay to Messrs. E. and R. Garrould, 150, Edgware Road, Hyde Park, W., for patterns of their new Virnot Veiling. It is a charming material, soft and silky, and is the result of many experiments in the production of a veiling which shall be both softer in texture and more durable than gossamer. Virnot Veiling is not affected by water, in which it can be placed, and afterwards dried and ironed, and yet retain all its lustre and softness of appearance. We do not think that this can be claimed on behalf of any other veiling, and the importance of this characteristic will be appreciated by nurses who know that a dragged veil at once gives an undesirable appearance to an otherwise neat uniform. Virnot Veiling deserves to be widely in demand, and as it has only to be seen for its merits to be appreciated, we predict for it a most successful future.

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