

recognised that the abolishment of the non-payment system in any school turns back into the hospital treasury a sum of money which has hitherto been appropriated for the maintenance of the training-school. Every penny of it and more is needed for those training-schools as a rule. In large schools, say of 100 or more pupils, a very large sum of money—indeed, from 12,000 dollars a year up—would be released for other purposes. It may be said, "But we receive in place of this allowance another assistant, scholarships, uniforms." Those who have good reason to know from experience about this will tell you that all of these may be supplied and still leave a good half of the appropriation untouched. Can it be better utilised than in improved methods of instruction, such, for instance, as a preliminary course? Just let us face here the question which has been asked before, and may not unlikely be asked again, as to whether or not such a course can or should be introduced generally into training-schools. Let me here state my opinion with emphasis. I do not think it can. But that is no reason why it should not be adopted by those schools which regard it as a good measure, are willing to do the work, and able, even with effort, to meet the expense. To take any other view of this and similar improvements, to say that because all schools cannot now adopt this method none of them should, is putting a premium upon mediocrity. Logically carried out, it would place our schools at the level of the lowest, prevent all progress, make useless every ideal. This same destructive spirit has met at different periods of history some of the most valuable and important reforms ever undertaken. A school should do what it can, the very best that it is able. If preparatory teaching is to become a recognised permanent feature of our system of instruction, the way will open by which it may be provided for those smaller schools of much excellence of work and ideals but of limited means and opportunity, or for those groups of affiliated schools which are clearly the next development in nursing. And it will come when it does because of the pioneer work of the larger schools willing to go through the periods of doubt and difficulty, which are the inevitable accompaniment of "enterprises of great pith and moment."

It is my hope that as many hospital training-schools as can see their way to preparatory teaching will adopt it; that others not able or not desiring to do this will co-operate to the fullest degree with such technical schools or other institutions as may be available; that every possible test will be made of the value and efficacy of this method; that groups of affiliating schools will try the experiment of establishing central preparatory schools of their own, ultimately, in every State. By that date we shall have ceased to call them preparatory schools and shall call them what they will be, schools of nursing, where the fundamental sciences are taught

practically and theoretically, where the theory and principles of nursing are taught, but where practical training and experience in nursing in all its branches may be supplied to the pupils through those hospitals, one or many, which are now struggling with such inadequate means to carry on the educational work of training-schools. Preparatory instruction points the way, and has thus performed its mission. We should realise this, however; if the preparatory work that has been done stopped in every school at this moment, it still would have been well worth all the effort that has been made in the effect it has had upon the education of nurses, and particularly upon the standards and requirements for admission to training-schools. In the constructive stage of our work we can well take heed of the means by which improvements have been effected in other branches of education, remembering that the objects of educational reform are from beginning to end quite the same everywhere, to prepare the individual not only for better service, but for a better life.

The Affiliation of the Smaller and Special Hospitals for Training Purposes.*

By Miss HELEN TODD,

Matron of the National Sanatorium, Bournemouth

MADAM PRESIDENT, LADIES,—Our subject this evening is one of great importance to all those engaged in the education of nurses, and as the views and opinions of members of this Council cannot fail to be both interesting and instructive, I shall only speak very briefly, merely suggesting a few points which may serve for guidance in the discussion which is to follow.

For the sake of convenience we may consider our subject under the following heads:—

1. The present state of things as regards the so-called training of nurses in small general and special hospitals.
2. The effect which State Registration will have upon these Institutions if their nursing arrangements continue as at present.
3. What is meant by affiliation.
4. What classes of Institutions should affiliate.
4. The results of such a movement and its possibilities in the future.
6. And, lastly, is it practicable?

Every Superintendent of Nursing Associations, whether public or private, is well aware that a very enormous percentage of nurses applying for vacancies have worked only in small hospitals or those devoted to special diseases (48.61 per cent. out of 600 applications in one year). As Matron of

* Read before the Matrons' Council, London, June, 1905.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)