

THE
BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS REDFORD FENWICK

No. 981.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1907.

Vol. XXXVIII

Editorial.

THE PROVINCIAL TRAINING SCHOOLS.

No one interested in nursing education can fail to be struck on visiting many provincial hospitals with the excellent training ground for nurses which they afford, and the admirable way in which the training school is conducted. The result is that a steady supply of excellent nurses trained in the provinces is available to fill the many nursing posts which are opening up on all sides, and these schools are thus doing good public service.

There is somewhat of a tendency to exalt the training given in the large London hospitals, and to relegate that given elsewhere to a secondary position. But the true test of the value of nursing education is the practical efficiency of the nurse when trained, and from this point of view the larger provincial hospitals, with an adequate variety of medical, surgical and gynaecological cases, have much to offer. The work of the nurse pupils includes much that is performed by the students in a London hospital to which a medical school is attached, and the knowledge and skill thus acquired cannot fail to be of great subsequent value to the nurse.

More and more it is being realised that what is needed to fit nurses for their work after leaving the training schools, is a thorough knowledge of practical nursing details, and there is little doubt that any Central Examining Board called into existence under a Nurses' Registration Act will take pains to ascertain the practical efficiency of candidates for its certificate.

Theoretical instruction is of course essential, as this alone affords a firm foundation for the acquisition of practical knowledge,

but in many provincial schools admirable lectures are given by the medical staff, and thorough instruction in matters pertaining to her province by the Matron and Superintendent of Nursing, who also frequently is responsible for the work in the operating theatre, and is thus able to give personal instruction and supervision to the succession of probationers who pass through this department. A nurse who has made good use of her opportunities under these circumstances, should be able to hold her own anywhere.

It is thus apparent that the effect of any Act for the Registration of Trained Nurses must be to make training in the Provincial Schools increasingly sought after and appreciated, for the object of probationers will then be not so much to gain admittance to any particular school as to find out which schools have proved by their results that they are capable of preparing their pupils to pass the registration tests imposed, and wherever in the United Kingdom such schools are found, the opportunities for training which they afford will be sought after, and their prestige will be high.

Do any desire to prove this statement let them study the question as demonstrated by the working of the Central Midwives' Board. The ambition of every midwifery pupil is to obtain the certificate of the Board, carrying with it the right to have her name inscribed on the Midwives' Roll, and to use the title of "certified midwife." Any school which can show that it can efficiently prepare pupils in practical and theoretical work has no lack of pupils, and it is interesting to observe that the provincial schools are proving themselves as competent as the London ones in this connection.

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