

## Matrons in Council.

### WHAT IS A TRAINED NURSE?



THE following are the new Rules for the admission of Probationers at University College Hospital, and as a system of payment for training, has been adopted, they are peculiarly interesting at the present moment to

#### Matrons in Council:—

Probationers are admitted between the ages of twenty-four and thirty years. Application to be made to the Sister Superior at University College Hospital.

The payment for one year's training is £30, exclusive of washing.

In order that Probationers may qualify for a certificate, they may be continued for the full three years, by paying £20 for the second year, and £15 for the third year's training, exclusive of washing; at the end of that time they will be qualified for service on the staff, should there be vacancies, or to secure appointments elsewhere.

Payments to be made half-yearly in advance. No portion of any payment can be returned, should the engagement be broken on either side, and no Probationer will be considered eligible for a certificate unless she shall have passed through three years' training, and shall have satisfactorily passed examinations in the subjects, both theoretical and practical, which have formed the three years' instruction.

All Probationers shall take their part for the first six months in the cleaning of vessels used for the sick, and in keeping clean and tidy the offices belonging to the Wards, and in such manual work in the Wards as shall be required from them.

Probationers shall receive instruction from the Ward Sisters and Charge Nurses in their various duties, and must attend the course of lectures and the class given by the Sister on the lectures.

Probationers are not allowed to attend the junior and senior course of lectures in the same year.

Whilst working in the Hospital, Probationers will be entirely under the authority of the Sister Superior, and of any Sister whom she may place over them in their work; and in cases of unfitness or wilful disobedience, they will be subject to dismissal.

Before a Probationer's name can be entered on the books, she must apply personally to the Sister Superior between the hours of 11 and 12 a.m., or 2 and 4 p.m., who will, if she thinks her fitting, supply her with the form to be filled in.

For the first six months Probationers provide their own uniform, which must be the same as that in use in the hospital; at the end of that time an indoor uniform will be given to them. They must also wear *quiet* boots, without trimming, in the wards, and must brush their hair back, and not wear it hanging over their foreheads.

Everything will be provided for Probationers in the way of board, and also medical attendance.

Probationers must not receive gratuities from patients in the Hospital under any circumstances.

Probationers come for a month on trial, and do not pay their fees until the end of that time. Their acceptance depends upon their capabilities. If they are not accepted, they pay 10s. a week for their board during their month of trial.

No Probationers are received who have had any previous training, unless they consent to commence from the beginning.

MADAM,—I hardly like to encroach again on your valuable space, but there are a few remarks I should like to make in reference to one or two points raised by some of your correspondents on this interesting subject. Miss Stewart, in her admirable letter last week, seems to think that "I set a very small value on training, because I consider it can be paid for in labour." Now, as I explained in my last letter, that labour was just as fair a return for privileges received as money, I hardly see how that can be. It has been said that "We value most what we *pay* for," but, surely, we value equally if not more what we *work* for. After all, the money payment for a thing is, to many, an easy way of acquiring it. I quite agree with an "Old Lady Pupil," that Nurses should pay for the greater comforts and privileges they now enjoy. The only suggestion I would throw out is this, whether it would be wise or just to make these privileges and the payment for them compulsory on all alike? Should they not be optional according to the circumstances of the Probationers? I cannot but feel, if payment was exacted from all alike, the public would be deprived of the services of many excellent and capable women, whose vocation would be lost through want of funds to carry it out. When I entered St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1884, there were no paying Probationers, and the ward work required from Probationers in those days was sufficient to pay twice over for their training. I am very certain of this, that the training, hard as it was, has been of inestimable value to me, and I would not have exchanged it for any of the privileges that Probationers of to-day deem so essential. There is also another point to be considered in making payment compulsory. Unlike other professions or trades, a Nurse cannot commence her training till she is 23 years of age at the earliest—a boy commences his apprenticeship usually at sixteen—she is thus a source of expense to her parents long after the age when, under ordinary circumstances, she should be self-supporting. Also, the chances against her being able to continue the training, must be duly appreciated, for the numbers of Probationers, who break down during the first few months, is too well known to need further comment. In conclusion, I must add my entire concurrence with "An old London Hospital Sister" and Miss M. Pincoffs, on the danger of giving undue prominence to the scientific side of nursing for first year's Probationers. A Nurse, before everything should be practical and thorough; obedience is her first duty, and to this foundation the superstructure of theoretical knowledge can be added by degrees.—Yours faithfully,

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