

course of the morbid processes she is observing. At the close of the third year there will be another very practical examination, which will prove, as well as an examination can prove, the efficiency or non-efficiency of the Nurse, who will either prove to have reached at last the minimum standard of excellence laid down by her Training School, or may be referred back for six months' further training.

Another important point is that the Training School should be in connection with a Hospital, where there are a sufficient number of beds and change of patients, to enable the Probationer to gain the necessary experience. The Royal British Nurses' Association have lately stated the minimum number of beds, to ensure efficiency, as 40, and when such an authority lays down a rule, I will not attempt to dispute it.

In every Training School there should be a good reference library, and when possible a good class-room and study. Among the necessary fittings should be an articulated and disarticulated skeleton, models and maps of the various parts of the human body; and in addition the teachers may perhaps make use of the various specimens and dissections in the Hospital Museum. In order that the class-work and lectures may be of practical use, the Probationer must be made to understand their *necessity* and the folly of shirking this part of their training.

I believe that in America the Nurse Training Schools and Hospitals are of far more mechanical perfection than ours, and that the Nurses are very highly taught. But I do not find that their Nurses are really better than ours. Nay, from the fact that they have English trained Nurses at the head of many of their Training Schools, I gather that there is in some degree an inferiority, and I imagine that the very perfection of their mechanism is the fault. Nurses will never be made by theoretic teaching. Nursing is too essentially a practical profession. The method of training which makes the Nurse inquire and teach herself will always prove the most successful. The Training School in which the candidates are most carefully chosen, and weeded, where the Sisters are women of education, intelligence, and varied experience, when medical and surgical staff are interested in the welfare and efficiency of the Nursing Staff, and where the Matron is supported in her efforts by a wise and practical Board of Governors, will always be the most successful. What we want is to see Nursing a profession of sufficient merit and distinction as to make it desirable for our best class of women, not a refuge for the destitute and the inefficient.

DISCUSSION.

At the conclusion of this paper, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick expressed herself as being much in harmony with Miss Stewart's views, especially on the suggestions she had brought forward regarding the preliminary training of Probationers. The profession was in a transition stage, and both Matrons and Nurses were anxious to take wise and advantageous counsel together. For her part she was anxious that there should be a consensus of opinion as to the best preliminary course for Probationers. In the past, the pupil Nurses had to "pick up" information as best they might from the "Sisters" under whom they worked, some of whom did not know or care about teaching Probationers. Experts *only* should be allowed to teach.

There was little doubt that in the future we should see the establishment of a Central Nursing College for the Metropolis, and that the final Examination and Certificate would probably be conducted and awarded by a combined Board of medical men and Nurses.

Miss Mollett doubted whether a preliminary training would be possible in small and provincial Hospitals. She thought that the small numbers and want of funds would prevent a preliminary training being established, excepting in populous centres, from which it would not be difficult for pupils to gravitate to the various smaller Hospitals.

Miss Poole drew attention to the difficulty in provincial Hospitals of attaining to a high standard of perfection. In the provinces one felt isolated, hence it was difficult to know what was being done elsewhere. She thought it would be most valuable if there could be some central examination established in some of the large towns for which qualified Nurses might enter, so as to give them some definite standard to work up to. What she meant was a qualifying examination which would bestow on the successful candidate a higher standard of qualification.

Miss Breay remarked that so far as maternity nursing was concerned, the L.O.S. certificate gave this additional qualification, and she cordially agreed with Miss Poole that it would be a great benefit to apply the same system to general nursing.

Miss Stewart, in conclusion, said she thought a final examination would be the logical outcome of State Registration. She thought it a great disadvantage that there was no mark of distinction between the thoroughly and efficiently trained Nurse and those with little training and experience. Such a central examination as had been suggested would establish a kind of Honours list, and would thus draw a distinction between the good, bad, and indifferent Nurses.

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