

In making up our list of hospitals we find that we have, indeed, a varied selection. There is the small general hospital, hospitals for children, for the general diseases of women, for women and children, for obstetrical cases, for gynæcological cases, and private hospitals for the insane. Again, we have hydro-therapeutic establishments, special hospitals for the carrying out of the rest-cure and for the treatment of nervous disorders, private hospitals and sanatoriums, hospitals in connection with large industrial enterprises, factories, railroads and mines, emergency hospitals, hospitals for infectious and contagious diseases, and those devoted to diseases of the eye, ear and throat. But, besides these hospitals, we have another large class of institutions which provides homes for the poor and feeble, and which necessarily have wards connected with them. These are called by various names, such as homes and infirmaries, but inasmuch as part at least of their work is connected with the nursing of the sick, they are to be considered in this respect as hospitals.

Hospitals of one kind or another would then appear to be almost numerous enough. They form a network which reaches from ocean to ocean, and from the north to the extreme south of the land. But it may be said that while the number of large hospitals hardly exceeds one hundred, the smaller are many times as numerous.

The existence of these small and special hospitals are the outcome of various factors. Some have been founded from pure philanthropy or as memorials of departed friends; others are the monuments of wealthy people, who wish to perpetuate their names, and, in a country where fortunes are made as rapidly as in America, this form of bequest is not unusual. Others, again, are integral parts of medical schools or universities, and their existence is demanded by the medical professors as a necessary adjunct to medical instruction. But, perhaps, a larger class still are the result of specialisation among physicians, who open private hospitals, or so-called sanatoriums, in which their own particular classes of patients are cared for.

A study of the past and present history of hospitals, and more especially those of the last class, goes to show that the possibility of establishing and carrying on so many various hospitals and the continuous increase in their numbers is in a large measure due to the present system of nursing. Previous to the organisation of Training Schools for Nurses, and for some years after, we find comparatively few hospitals in existence; but with the advent and success of the trained nurse the question of providing for the proper care of the sick in hospitals was solved, and forthwith we find both physicians and laymen rushing into hospital construction, with the result that we have numbers of hospitals in operation to-day, with much to be grateful for in connection with them and not a few things to deplore.

Of those with which we are dealing at present, the small general hospital probably ranks first in point of usefulness, as it opens its doors at one time or another to all of the diseases for which the special hospitals are designed. Certainly, last by rank comes the private hospital or sanatorium, opened by the specialist for his own particular patients and for his own personal profit.

That any kind of a hospital which does its duty by its patients has a perfect right to exist would seem to be beyond question. Nevertheless, it must be insisted

that each owes a duty to the public as well, and must be open to commendation or censure, according to the system employed in providing proper nursing for its sick. Upon investigation we find several methods employed. Some have organised training schools or offer a post-graduate course to nurses from the smaller schools. Others, again, employ graduate trained nurses. In a few co-operative nursing is established, one school undertaking the care of two or more hospitals. Still others are under the care of religious orders, and a few employ a corps of paid attendants who have never attended any regular school.

These various hospitals we may divide into three groups:

(1) The small general hospital or cottage hospital, containing from fifty to seventy-five or one hundred beds. Hospitals for children, for women and children, lying-in hospitals, hospitals for gynæcological diseases, for nervous disorders and for rest-cure cases.

(2) The very small general hospital, providing from six to forty beds. Sanatoriums, hydro-therapeutic establishments, hospitals for infectious and contagious diseases, emergency hospitals, institutions for the insane, railroad and similar hospitals, and eye, ear and throat infirmaries.

(3) Infirmaries and homes. Hospitals for incurables. With but few exceptions it will be found that the nursing in the first and second groups is done by training schools established in connection with each hospital. With many of the institutions in the third group we also find training schools: others, again, are cared for by paid attendants, by the post-graduate system, and by paid trained nurses.

But unfortunately, in all of the groups, dozens or even hundreds of hospitals are met with containing only from six to ten or twenty beds, and yet maintaining training schools for nurses. The well-known circular of information is sent out offering apparently the same advantages as the larger schools. The course of instruction covers two years; the pupils must be of a certain age, though frequently they are taken as young as eighteen; they have certain hours on duty, time for rest and recreation. It would appear also they have the same classes and lectures, for, according to the prospectus, they are instructed "in the general care of the sick, making beds, changing bed and body linen, giving baths, dressing bed sores, making bandages, in the application of fomentations and of poultices, in cupping, leeching" and other accomplishments. We meet again and again the same old list, but whether it means much or little, or less than nothing, it is often impossible to say. Certainly for the uninitiated and ignorant woman who knows nothing of hospitals it is a fine bait. But as an addition we have the statement that after the probation month the pupil will receive each month for the first year a certain number of dollars and an increased number of dollars monthly for the second year, and this ostensibly to cover the cost of uniform and text books. Finally examinations are held and certificates of qualification are presented. But when one reads in the *Trained Nurse* such statements as these, "Two nurses graduated from the — hospital with all honours," one certainly is justified in inferring that honours were easy in such cases.

(To be continued.)

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