

Hospitals now affords to qualified medical men opportunities of clinical study in all London hospitals to which medical schools are attached, with the exception of S. Bartholomew's and the London Hospital. It is further hoped that by the end of the present year, the London Post-Graduate course will be merged in the Medical Graduates' College, which it is proposed to establish in Chenies Street; Dr. Fletcher Little, who has done much good work in systematising the teaching given in connection with the London Post-Graduate course, being one of the Secretaries of the proposed institution. Is it too much to hope that as the need of post-graduate instruction for medical men has now been demonstrated, that encouragement will, in the future, be given to the profession of nursing—the handmaid of medicine—to qualify itself for the duties which devolve upon it in a like manner. It would surely be in the highest degree incongruous and illogical to admit the need in the case of the one profession, and to deny it in the other.

NURSES' EXAMINATIONS.

THE Norwich Board of Guardians are in a difficulty concerning the education of the nurses in their workhouse infirmary. They have a wholly laudable ambition that the probationers trained under the Board shall have theoretical as well as practical instruction, and that their knowledge shall be tested by examination. With this end in view they have applied to the Committee of Management of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital to allow their probationers to attend the lectures given at that Hospital, and to sit for the examination which follows. The Guardians were prepared to pay all expense. The Hospital authorities agreed to allow the probationers to attend the lectures, but not to go in for the examination, much to the disappointment of the Guardians. After all, however, this present disappointment may have a beneficial result. Hospital examinations, as at present conducted, are of very little real value, as the thoroughness of the examination varies according to the mind of the individual examiner, who is usually also the lecturer—a most undesirable condition of things in our opinion. Our advice to progressive Boards of Guardians is to unite, and institute an examination for their nurses, at some convenient centre, by an examiner appointed by the Local Government Board.

This would far exceed in value a private examination by an individual hospital, and would, moreover, point to the path in which, sooner or later, our General Hospitals must follow.

WORKHOUSE DIETARIES.

THE Departmental Committee, appointed by the President of the Local Government Board, to inquire into the question of Workhouse Dietaries has now issued its report, signed by the Chairman, Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., and the eight other members of the Committee, subject to the dissent expressed by Mr. W. E. Knollys in a minute attached to the report. The chief question which has occupied the Committee is the fixed ration system, and the waste stated to arise from it. It was originally instituted for the following reasons, that it was supposed to afford a check on the stores, and to secure an adequate amount of food to each inmate. After full inquiry the Committee do not consider the reasons in favour of the fixed ration system strong enough to preclude them from recommending that it should be altered, if the complaints that it causes serious waste are well founded.

In the diets of the sick, with which we are most concerned, certain modifications are recommended in the system of feeding in infirmaries and sick wards. In many cases they found that the inmates, in addition to being supplied with substantial extras, which they were barely able to consume, were also kept on full ordinary diet. Again, they found that at one of the London Infirmaries the bread for dinner was served out with the bread for breakfast, and consequently became so stale and dry that considerable quantities were wasted. They further report that at some workhouses the cooking appliances are at present very defective, and point out that many Boards of Guardians do not realize that "a skilled cook is essential to economical administration." They make a practical suggestion that different dietaries should be arranged for the Winter and Summer months, and consider that dietary tables should be drawn up for a fortnight, so as to vary the monotony which occurs if the same diet is repeated each week. The discretionary powers which it is proposed to allow to the authorities should have the effect both of checking waste and of enabling them to provide a more palatable dietary.

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