

increasingly felt to be most desirable for our general hospitals, and having once impressed upon women with obstetric training that the certificate of this Society after an independent examination is of more value to them than that of any individual school, it has been able to insist upon a higher standard of education in those institutions where it was least efficient, otherwise their reputation as training schools decreased, and they consequently were unable to obtain the pupils, who afford them a considerable source of income. The present question is not, however, whether the Society has done good in the past, but whether the system is desirable at the present time. When the examination of the London Obstetrical Society was established, nursing education was in an even more chaotic condition than at the present time, and it is reasonable to suppose that the medical men who instituted the examination did not realize that in endeavouring to establish a minimum standard of education in obstetric nursing, they were unintentionally injuring well-qualified nurses. In point of fact, they are doing in the nursing profession what they decline to do in their own. They are recognising and certifying specialists. An essential condition to medical qualification is that the practitioner, be he never so expert in one special branch, must be qualified in medicine, surgery, and obstetrics, before he is allowed to practise any one of the three. He must, in fact, have a general education before the profession of medicine will allow that he is qualified to practise. This is precisely the view held by those members of the nursing profession who have devoted most thought to the definition of a standard of nursing education. They are strongly of opinion that women should not be certificated, or held to be competent, after a short training in one special branch of work. We have no doubt that this view is the right one, and it is difficult to see how medical men, who so strongly support this policy in the case of their own profession can logically oppose it in the case of the newer but kindred profession of nursing. We hope therefore that the Council of the London Obstetrical Society will for the future demand evidence of general nursing education before they permit a candidate to enter for their examination. Amongst trained nurses who hold the L.O.S. certificate the opinion seems to be unanimous that the adoption of this course is urgently required.

Annotations.

HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR IS DUE.

For some time past it has been a sorrow to many who appreciate the noble work done by Henri Durrant, the founder of the International Red Cross Society, to know that this great philanthropist was in financial straits. It is therefore a great pleasure to record that M. Durrant has been selected by the Commissioners of the Swedish Nobel "Million Fund," who are for the first time allotting the prizes of the Fund this year, as the recipient of a prize. It would be impossible for their choice to have fallen upon any one who would be as universally approved by popular judgment. The prizes were by Nobel's desire to be awarded for some work of eminent social or scientific importance produced "during the past year." With the approval of his heirs, however, the limit of time has been changed to "the last few years." Other persons who are to receive the first prizes are: (1) For eminent scientific discoveries, Professors Röntgen, Marconi, and Nordenskjöld, and (2) for eminent social work, Frederic Bajer of "The League of Peace," as well as Henri Durrant.

WOMEN ON HOSPITAL BOARDS.

It is satisfactory to note that the admission of women to the Board of Management of the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, is now under discussion, and that the present Board seems to be in favour of the movement in this direction. The difficulty in the way is apparently that by the regulations of the present Charter the Board cannot consist of more than ten persons, and the present managers declare that "upon their responsibility they cannot see their way to dispense with any of the ten men at present upon the board." However, the sympathy of the Board on the question of the representation of women being secured, there should be no serious difficulty in obtaining an amendment to the Charter, which will sanction an increase in the number of persons composing the Board, and it may be hoped that steps will be taken to secure the necessary alteration without delay. In adopting this course the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, will be following in the steps of the Western Infirmary and the Victoria Infirmary, in that city, and of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. Women are represented on the Boards of Management of all these institutions, with most satisfac-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)