

she must break her agreement and leave. We replied: 'You may do so if you will repay to us the salary you have received while you have been here, and the cost of nearly two years' food, lodging, washing, and uniform,' which in all amounted to £104. This, 'Justice' said, her father would certainly not do, though it was possible he might consent to pay £10! Moreover, she added that whether we consented or not she intended to leave at the end of two years, when she would have gained our two years' certificate! Strange to say, we refused to accept this convenient (to her) decision. *Hinc ille lachrymæ.*"

We have every sympathy with the authorities of the London Hospital in their justifiable desire to recoup themselves for the expense entailed in giving a woman a valuable professional education, if she breaks her contract and leaves the service of the hospital before the expiration of the contract. But what we do not approve is the point brought out in this correspondence that nurses can buy a certificate at the end of two years, for which, under ordinary circumstances, they would now have to serve for four years. If it were only a question of payment, then it would be right that service should be given in lieu of cash, but we doubt if there is a Matron of a training school of over 200 beds in England, outside the London Hospital, who would consider that an adequate nursing education, as at present required, can be given in less than three years work in the wards. The fact, indeed, that the London Hospital could not be efficiently nursed on the short term service, was amply proved, at the inquiry which took place before the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1890, and though it is to be regretted that the term of *training* required of probationers has not been raised since that time, the term of *service* has been lengthened, and patients in the wards of this hospital have now the care of third year nurses, and some of the nurses the invaluable benefit of the experience so obtained.

It is this third year's experience which, in our opinion, is an essential part of a nurse's education. In her first two years she is employed in learning the practical details of her profession. She is not, or, should not, be entrusted with responsibility for the efficient conduct of the ward, or for the teaching of probationers; she is in the pupil stage herself. But in her third year, in the absence of the Sister, and on night duty, she may be held responsible for the management of the ward, and may assist in teaching probationers, and thus, though still under observation, acquire the self-

reliance essential to the completion of her training.

We will now consider, briefly, the position with regard to the woman who buys a certificate. The hospital patients suffer in some degree, because such probationers are not invariably selected from the pick of the candidates, but from the comparatively limited number of those who are able to pay the required fees, and who may be under, or over the age at which candidates are considered most suitable for training as regular probationers. Surely this must be prejudicial to the interests of the training school.

To sum up the case under consideration, it should not be possible by payment, or otherwise, for a probationer to obtain a certificate of training if she breaks her contract, and we consider that the authorities of the London Hospital place themselves in a very untenable position by awarding certificates to two classes of probationers on separate terms. The Training School curriculum in term of service, teaching, and certification should be uniform for all. This is the only just and satisfactory basis for an efficient School, and we venture to hope that in the near future the three years' term of training will be adopted at the London Hospital, and the sale of certificates abolished.

AN EPILEPTIC COLONY.

The David Lewis Trustees, who have already made generous gifts for charitable purposes, have now given a sum not far short of £100,000 for the establishment of an epileptic colony in Cheshire, between Knutsford, and Chelford. The site which is laid out like a park covers some 3,000 yards, and part will be available for farming pursuits in which the inhabitants of the colony will be employed. There will also be recreation grounds. A feature of the scheme is that the patients will live in detached homes containing at most 24 inmates. The arrangements will be on a most liberal scale throughout, and provision is made for the erection of an infirmary as well as of a recreation hall, which is placed at the rear of the administrative block.

The Home when complete will be much in advance of anything yet attempted for the accommodation of epileptics, and the experiment will be watched with great interest. It is estimated that the completion of the building will take about two years, and that accommodation will be provided for about 300 epileptics.

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