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NURSING EDUCATION.

POST-GRADUATE INSTRUCTION FOR NURSES.

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So busy have nurse educationalists been in solving the problem of correct education for the would-be nurse that, as yet, very little time and thought have been devoted to the more advanced course of instruction by which the woman who is already a graduate nurse may gain additional experience and knowledge in her chosen work.

Some effort, however, has been made in several of the American hospitals to meet this need. A few of the schools, willing to be of further assistance to the nurses to whom they have already given the preliminary training, have attempted to provide post-graduate work for their alumnae. In most instances this has resolved itself into granting such graduates as may wish it the privilege of returning to the hospital for a short period during the school vacation time and of allowing them to take up what work they choose in the wards or operating rooms. Sometimes, in addition, theoretical instruction in the form of lectures has been attempted.

No claim is made by these schools of giving a regular post-graduate course; they are merely attempting to assist their graduates in the only way which offers. Undoubtedly this opportunity of again coming into contact with hospital methods and of observing advances in all branches of the work is of great value to the nurse who is fortunate enough to be a graduate of a school sufficiently old, liberal in thought, and strong in finances to allow it to attempt such an undertaking. As far as it goes it is good, but it does not go far enough; is not a permanent educational feature, and reaches only a very limited number of nurses. The schools which are able to undertake even this most simple form of post-graduate work are few in number and fewer still are they which are capable of keeping up this effort year after year, and of continuing to meet the needs of their graduates.

Schools for nurses connected with our modern hospitals, if they carry out the purposes for which

they are established—that is, of nursing the sick of the hospital and of educating women to be nurses—do about as much as such institutions, with their present limited staff of teachers can successfully accomplish. If the same teaching force, in a spirit of generous self-sacrifice for the good of the cause, undertakes in addition post-graduate work, without question, sooner or later the added strain will be detrimental to the teaching staff, and consequently to the school and to the institution. Should hospital authorities be willing to pay additional salaries and provide extra teachers to carry on this work, the question would assume a different form; but until such a time arrives it is doubtful whether heads of schools, in justice to their other work, should attempt post-graduate teaching.

Colleges and universities have found it impracticable to deal with pupil and graduate at one time. There are instances on record of the college student making complaint that material necessary for the undergraduate had been utilised for the graduate. These complaints, as a rule, have been listened to and the demands of the students met. Post-graduate work has not been ignored in the several professions, but provision for it is made entirely outside of the ordinary schools of instruction. The same should hold good in nurses' schools. In most hospitals, with proportionately large or small schools attached, and particularly since the three years' course is required, not only the time of the teachers belongs to the school but the material for study and opportunities for experience should be given to the pupil, not the graduate.

The undoubted spirit of unrest which is sure to accompany the advent of graduates into a nurses' school is another reason why these schools are not the right places for post-graduate work.

In several of the cities of the United States there are hospitals devoted to specialties, offering post-graduate training in that one branch of the work to any nurse who is a graduate in good standing of an approved nurses' school. These hospitals give from three to nine months' course practical work, with usually some theoretical instruction. Most of them pay a salary of from ten to fifteen dollars per month, and require the nurse to wear the hospital uniform. To the nurse who, having completed the course in her own school, feels that her training has been lacking in certain branches, these courses in special hospitals are of value. It is only a small class of nurses, however, to which these special courses appeal.

The average woman who has graduated from a school giving instruction in all branches of nursing, when she wishes, for one reason or another, for post-graduate instruction, usually feels the necessity of a general "brush-up." The new

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