

Progress in the Training Schools.

It is always a pleasure to note the progress made from time to time in various institutions in raising the standard of nursing education and towards the attainment of a uniform standard. It is, therefore, with gratification that we record that St. Thomas's Hospital has now adopted the three years' standard of training and certification. Until quite recently nurses trained in this institution received no certificate, and were placed on a register, kept by the authorities, at the end of a year. We congratulate the Committee of this hospital on the action now taken, feeling sure that it is an act of justice not only to the nurses trained in the school, but to the profession at large and to the sick.

At Guy's Hospital a new departure was made last year in the inauguration of a Preliminary Nursing School, thus systematising the training. Not only is it of great benefit both to the probationer and to the school that she should receive instruction in such subjects as Elementary Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene, Dispensing, Bandaging, Use of Instruments, Bed-making, Housework, Sick-room Cookery, &c., before entering the wards, but, during the course, the Matron and teachers have an opportunity of judging of the suitability of the pupils for nursing work, and those who are obviously unsuited can be weeded out before entering the wards at all, thus relieving the Ward Sisters of much unnecessary trouble and anxiety, and the patients of the ministrations of incompetent attendants. The preliminary training course at Guy's extends over six weeks, and the fee for the course, including board, residence, tuition, and practical work, is six guineas.

While preliminary training for probationers is becoming increasingly recognised as desirable, it is probable that only in the largest hospitals will it be possible to organise courses of this kind, and the need of a central preliminary school, working in connection with all general training-schools, is becoming increasingly apparent.

At the London Hospital the Committee have had under consideration the desirability of encouraging the best nurses to remain in the service of the hospital, and have decided to give every member of the nursing staff an addition of £5 per annum to her salary after six years from the date of her entrance as a probationer. Further, after the expiration of eighteen years' service, at a minimum age of forty-five, all members of the nursing staff will be eligible for pensions, the pension given being full pay without any allowances, calculated on the actual average pay received during the five years previous to the Sister or nurse relinquishing her active connection with the hospital. The weak point in the scheme

seems to be that "pensions are only to be paid during the pleasure of the Committee." Thus the nurses cannot have the assurance of a certain provision in their old age, although no doubt the Committee would not feel justified in withholding a pension without grave cause, so long as they were financially in a position to pay it.

The examination of probationers at this hospital is conducted by an outside medical examiner; undoubtedly a right principle, but to be complete there should be also associated with him a nursing examiner, to conduct the examination in practical nursing, who should be unconnected with the hospital.

At King's College Hospital the course of training is comprehensive and thorough. Lectures are given on Anatomy, Physiology, and Surgical, Medical, and Obstetrical Nursing, as well as on special subjects, and nurses are expected to become skilful in the following subjects:—

1. In the dressing of blisters, burns, sores, wounds, in applying fomentations, poultices, and minor dressings, and removal of plaster, in the application of leeches, and in the administration of subcutaneous injections.

2. In the administration of enemata for men and women, and in the use of the catheter for women, in the management of trusses, and appliances in uterine complaints.

3. In the management of helpless patients—i.e., moving, changing bedclothes, cleanliness, feeding, keeping warm and cool, preventing and dressing bed-sores, managing position.

4. In bandaging, making bandages, rollers, lining of splints, &c.

5. In making the beds of patients, and removal of sheets whilst patient is in bed.

6. In attending upon operations, and learning the management of operating theatres and all pertaining to them.

7. In cooking beef-tea, gruel, arrowroot, egg-flip, puddings, drinks, &c., for the sick.

8. In the ventilation of wards, in preserving great cleanliness, and using disinfectants in all utensils.

9. In the careful observation of the following particulars respecting the sick:—

Secretions, expectorations, pulse, skin, appetite, delirium, breathing, sleep, state of wounds, eruptions, formation of matter, effect of diet, stimulants, and medicine, signs of approaching death.

10. In the management of convalescents.

It will thus be seen that, all along the line, efforts are being made to advance the educational and financial interests of nurses, whether by providing for their more systematic and practical instruction, and their certification after an adequate term of training, or for a provision for the time when they can no longer continue in full work. It is a pleasure to us to be able to record that in spite of some discouragements there is evidence that there is a movement towards a higher and more uniform standard in our large training-schools.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)