

months, and this, as at Rome, may be attended by applicants.

"These courses appear well on paper (and they certainly represent a great step in advance), but as actual fact they often do more harm than good. Instead of being of practical benefit they only serve to confuse the ideas of the pupils. The instructor should be able to descend to the level of the pupils, so as to explain things in a way they can understand. Certainly it is most difficult for a class of young persons who have scarcely gone through the elementary schools to understand any part of so complicated an organism as the human body.

"Instead of being made to memorise the skeleton and its parts, would it not be better for the nurse to understand the daily functions of the body? So it happens that, whether the course is taken or not, the ignorance of the pupils remains the same. Especially, even if the course is taken, they have no idea of a sepsis and antiseptics, of the diets for the various maladies, of how to apply treatment, and so on. Who ever teaches them their duties towards the sick? Who shows them how to make a patient comfortable? Who drills them in the cleanliness so essential in a ward or sick-room? Who teaches so many other little essential points? The physician cannot do this. Often he does not know how himself. No one can teach this but a woman, and therefore the nurses must have a head nurse who can teach them.

"After having passed the requirements of the different hospitals they are taken into service under various economic conditions.

"The table which follows shows better than words the hours of work of the servant-nurses and their rates of payment.

"From this table it will be seen that their financial conditions are not brilliant, especially in comparison with the nature of the work they are called on to perform, and this is perhaps one reason why women of a higher grade do not enter the service.

"In many hospitals—for example, in Rome—in their free hours they have to do their own laundering. Few make any provision for old age; in others they are dismissed when no longer capable.

"As the result of insufficient pay the nurses demand fees from the patients. They have a marvellous art in extracting something, even from the poorest. The relations of the sick ones, hoping to get them better treatment, often give beyond their means.

"I do not know whether any hospitals forbid the taking of fees, but certainly in some the authorities count upon it in order to pay smaller wages. Then, too, this meagre payment often drives them into illicit or dishonest ways of gaining money.

"In general the nurses have the daily care of from eight to fifteen patients, and twice as many by night, but there are hospitals where one nurse may have thirty and over to attend and wait on.

"Tuscany is undoubtedly the most advanced part of Italy in regard to hospital service. Siena and Florence especially have excellent rules. The work of the nurses is well regulated and their future is provided for.

"On the other hand, in such centres as Turin, Milan, Rome, Naples, the service leaves much to be desired. Shameful conditions are found in one of the hospitals of Naples, where the patients nurse one another. In the last twenty years much has been done to improve the surroundings of the hospitals, but when will these most necessary reforms be made in the service? It is a question of the highest importance for the whole people: Of what use are hospitals if people will not go or stay there because they are badly treated?

"The service in private duty is even worse than in the hospitals, and is in great need of improvement."

In the table of statistics Signora Celli gives the hours of work, the wages, the food, and the accommodations for nurses of some forty-five hospitals, with remarks on special points. For want of space we condense this. Six hospitals fix their hours of work at twelve. Several give from ten to fourteen. Several have irregular periods, as: First day, nineteen; second day, eleven; third day, eleven. The round is then repeated. Others of these arrangements are:—First day, seventeen; second day, seventeen; third day, eight; fourth day, five; and first day, thirteen; second day, eleven; third day, ten; fourth day, seventeen. Every four days one free. Another is: First day, seventeen; second day, twelve; third day, seventeen. Every three days one-half day and one night free. One or two models give a six and one or two an eight hours' service, while one announces thirty-seven hours every third day! And another one, more inhuman yet, thirty to forty-eight hours' consecutive service; and two others from twenty-four to forty-eight! The wages vary from what would equal two dollars per month (not week) to eleven dollars per month. Eighteen of these hospitals supply no food to their nurses; several give two meals a day; one, wine only. Some others give food by weight, while some others give them the patients' full diet. None of the meals sound over-abundant.

For sleeping accommodations, seven hospitals give none. Of the others, the nurses are put up in numbers running from one in a room to forty-four in a dormitory described as "low and small." Several give the nurses small rooms in or near the wards.

Among the "remarks" are found such as this: "Every month eight to ten hours' rest," "every fifteen days three hours to go out," and one melancholy remark shows that the foundling asylums supply some of the material which grows up into servant-nurses.

At the time when this article was written these

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