

time, but, in the opinion of the writer, three years is the maximum period which should be set when we bear in mind that three years of work and study in a hospital training-school equal, if they do not exceed, in point of time a four years' college course. Each year in college is about eight months in length, and the full four years of college work means about thirty-two months of study. Each year of a hospital training-school is never less than eleven months, in which not one day, even Sunday, is free. There are no Christmas vacations, no Easter holidays, and summer vacations are usually limited to three, or sometimes two, weeks, and the result is that the student gives to acquire her profession more than the equivalent in time of a four years' college course. A four years' course of training-school work, judged by other scholastic standards, actually means five years of work and study, and is beyond the limits of time necessary for proper training in general nursing. In those instances where every portion of each year is fully and properly utilised, where the work and study are systematic and carefully graded, there is in three years, exclusive, possibly, of a preparatory term, abundant time for a full course of instruction, and an added year seems but a confession of weakness either in the methods or material of the school, or in the qualities of the students.

If in a large general hospital students are left month after month in certain departments, because they have become expert in the duties belonging to those departments, and it is easier to keep them there than to change and teach the duties to a new student, the chances are that the end of three years will find many with an ill-balanced training and total ignorance of some subjects. The same possibly might be true at the end of six years.

A nurse may pass from ward to ward and spend the greater portion of her time in giving medicines and taking temperatures, merely because she knows how, unless the closest watchfulness is exercised. Where the material for teaching is limited and fails to meet certain requirements which will be specified later in this paper, there is no call to establish a three-year course of training. The number of hours to be devoted to practical work in the hospital wards is a matter of first importance in planning a course of instruction. It is practically useless to provide elaborate schedules of study consisting of classes, lectures, demonstrations, &c., unless the pupils can go to those classes in a fit physical condition to profit by such instruction, and it is generally conceded in other educational institutions that any instruction given after five o'clock in the afternoon is more or less wasted effort. I think I am right in assuming that lectures in the evening and classes in the late afternoon are so universal in training schools as to form the rule; that students attend those classes who have risen at

6 a.m. or even earlier, and have from that time on, a period of from eight to ten hours, been engaged in active physical effort; that they commonly enter the class-room in a condition of physical fatigue which forbids any real mental effort. Neither the willingness or the enthusiasm of the student, nor the interest or the excellence of the subject and its manner of presentation, can arouse to fruitful activity minds so influenced or controlled by physical state.

In a study of working hours in representative schools made a few years ago, I found the average number of hours of practical work daily in hospital wards to be ten and a-half. Is it not folly to expect good results from even the best teaching under such conditions? Eight hours of practical work should be the limit of time required of students throughout the general term of the three years' course. In certain departments, such as operating rooms or maternity wards, it is sometimes impossible to regulate the hours, but the term of service in such departments is usually brief, and does not affect the main system. To eight hours of practical work, two hours may be added daily for theory in some form, either lecture, class or study, thus forming a ten-hour working day. And every effort should be made to bring the instruction into the earlier hours of the day, and to do away with evening classes and lectures as a rule.

Using these hours as a basis for our curriculum, we have:—

Practical work in wards and other departments: daily, eight hours; weekly, fifty-six hours.

Theoretical work, classes, lectures, laboratory: daily (Sunday omitted), two hours; weekly, twelve hours. Such an arrangement forms a fair working basis.

The direct object of the training-school being the preparation of women for the care of the sick of the community, no matter what forms of disease they may be suffering from, it is clear that the subjects upon which instruction is given must be such as will fulfil the object. What may be called the four great branches of nursing are the fundamentals of a good nursing education, and an indispensable requirement of a training-school. Every student should be thoroughly grounded in the care of medical, surgical, gynæcological, and obstetrical patients, and any school finding itself lacking in ability to teach properly any one of these subjects should either provide opportunities for its students to obtain such needed instruction in some other hospital or school, or cut short the term of instruction if that has been placed at three years.

To these four subjects should really be added the care of children, in view of the place in medicine which this subject takes. There is a growing appreciation of its importance from a nursing standpoint, and of the necessity for including it in a general course of training. The practical training in these

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