

Training of Hospital Nurses at Paris.*

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The creation of the School for Nurses of the Assistance Publique at the Salpêtrière, caused quite a sensation in the medical world.

Some were sceptical, others openly hostile, a small number, however, were happily convinced of its success.

The official inauguration of the School, on the 4th of November, 1908, gave us an opportunity of judging of this success, and we were happy to see how many adversaries had rallied, how many great masters did not spare their compliments.

The training, as it is organised in this school, is the best that can be given while awaiting the opening of a hospital, the nursing staff of which would be solely composed of nurses from the School. We could not agree with criticisms which sometimes reached our ears.

It is well to recall that our School is destined to prepare nurses for the hospitals, they must, therefore, have a training in accordance.

Moreover, notable differences are observed with what is done elsewhere.

Training in house-work takes place only in the School, in order to avoid the pupils being disturbed more than is necessary from their apprenticeship of nursing. We must also mention that the Assistance Publique is about to create a school for the domestic staff, which makes it necessary for the nurses to know this branch perfectly, so as to be able to direct the servants under their orders.

Moreover, our pupils, taking it in turns to do the housework, know what hard work it is to obtain cleanliness; their constant care is not to dirty uselessly and, this habit learnt during their two years spent in the School, is to be found in everything in the Hospital; the maids, who have the cleaning to do, have less trouble and more time, which enables them to keep the wards in the greatest cleanliness.

Each week, our pupils learn how to prepare light dishes for the sick: custards, cakes, etc.

Theoretical medical instruction given with the practical point of view constantly in sight, is imparted by special professors for each branch, at the School.

They consist in the first year of a series of 20 lessons for each of the lectures, which are:

(1) Anatomy and physiology, (2) Hygiene, (3) care to be given to the sick, (4) care to be given in surgical cases, 5, care of the aged, nervous patients, lunatics, and contagious patients, (6) care of children, (7) care of confinement cases and infants, (8) hospital administration, (9) pharmacy, (10) massage.

During the second year, the pupils have complementary lectures of 10 lessons, the object of which is to revise the lectures of the first year, as well as a deeper study of certain subjects which, having been put into practice, are better understood.

We were reproached with giving a too theoretical instruction and of neglecting the practical part.

Now this is not so, the practical apprenticeship is most complete.

We have at our disposal a ward for practical training, containing a bed, a wheel chair, stretcher, a dummy, and a very complete collection of instruments. Pupils of the second year called "monitresses" are entrusted with the care of teaching the pupils of the first year, divided into groups of ten. Thus it is that they have all made a bed, washed a patient, applied poultices or a blister, disinfected basins and scales, cleaned instruments, dressed wounds, sterilised milk, prepared pap, given injections, etc., etc. . . . it is impossible to mention all the subjects of these lessons, it would mean enumerating the material duties of a nurse. This is only to show that we give to practical demonstration the necessary importance.

We have also organised repetitions of different lectures, with interrogations under our direction, by the pupils of the second year. Besides this lesson being thus repeated, for the pupils of first year, those of second year, who undertake this rehearsal, are therefore most thoroughly up in the subject, this method gives us the best results.

Practical training is continued in the hospitals, under the direction of superintendents, and house-doctors.

Under the benevolent eyes of all, our pupils continue to learn, in each ward, the complete gamut of the care to be given, follow the doctors' visits, listen attentively to their explanations; they are often present at operations and follow up serious surgical cases. The doctors and house-doctors often give our pupils valuable lessons.

We beg to be allowed to express publicly our gratitude to the Professors Dieulafoy, Pinard, Dufour, Walter, Marfan, Broca, Caussade, Brocq, Rieffel, Bonnaire, and many others, who so kindly contribute to the instruction of the auxiliaries which the administration will soon place at their disposal.

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