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Editorial.

TEACHERS OF NURSES.

It is generally accepted that the teaching of nurses comes under two heads, theoretical instruction given by registered medical practitioners, and practical instruction given by Matrons, Assistant Matrons and Sisters. The provision of this instruction, however, is at present of a more or less informal character. In a few of the larger hospitals the medical teachers of nurses receive an honorarium, in a few a special grant is made to Sisters for acting as teachers to the pupils in nursing schools, in addition to their work as ward supervisors. These duties, in addition to responsibility for the care of the patients, and the cleanliness of the wards, have developed within the last thirty years with the foundation of training schools, they are usually taken for granted rather than defined, as the work is of a voluntary nature. It is nevertheless of great importance that evidence of ability to teach should be one of the qualifications for promotion to the position of Sister, that an honorarium should be added to a Sister's salary as an acknowledgment of her work in this respect, and that certain definite instead of indefinite duties should be expected of her for the due performance of which she should be answerable to the Matron. In the same way an honorarium should be given to medical practitioners who undertake the theoretical instruction of nurses.

The pros and cons of the question were recently discussed at some length at the annual meeting of the Board of Management of the General Hospital, Hereford, when the House Committee reported the appointment of a new house surgeon, at a salary of £120 a year, subject to the usual

bye-laws and conditions. They further reported that he had consented to give two courses of lectures in the year to the nurses, and recommended an honorarium of £5 5 0 for each course. Sir Archer Croft, who moved the adoption of the report, said that the committee were unanimous in making this recommendation. It entailed a great deal of work to give the lectures, and it was most necessary that the nurses should have a proper course. Although it was in the house surgeon's contract to do the work the committee strongly recommended his having this honorarium.

An amendment was moved to omit the honorarium on the ground that in view of the state of the finances the Board ought not to sanction this "totally unnecessary expenditure."

The Dean, who presided, said that he thought the salary which the House Surgeon was receiving should not be taken into consideration at all. The matters were quite separate. Eventually, we are glad to say, the amendment was withdrawn and the report adopted. Thus the principle that a lecturer to nurses is entitled to remuneration for his work was recognised.

It is quite certain that so long as the teaching of nurses is performed gratuitously, it must be more or less desultory and unequal in character, depending mainly for its efficiency on the interest and goodwill of the teacher, and we hope that the principle of obtaining the best teachers both in the theory and practice of nursing, and giving them definite remuneration for their work will be generally adopted.

The development of nursing education on the best lines is a question which before long must be considered from a broader standpoint than that of the individual hospital.

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