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EDITORIAL.

AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD OF NURSING EDUCATION.

As the date of the meeting of the International Council of Nurses at Cologne rapidly approaches it becomes apparent that its success is assured.

The International Council of Nurses is a consultative body, and in accordance with the decision of the Committee on Nursing Education which met in London in July, 1909, the Hon. Secretary, Miss J. C. van Lanschot Hubrecht, of Amsterdam, will present reports on Preliminary Education of Nurses sent in by the various National Councils. That from the United Kingdom has been prepared by Miss Margaret Breay, and demonstrates the unanimity of the Matrons of the hospitals where such courses have been fairly tested as to their great value both from the point of view of the pupils, and the training schools, secondly that practically the same subjects are taught in all the schools, thirdly the desirability of a three or six months' course in place of the more usual six or seven weeks, and fourthly the surprisingly few training schools which have inaugurated such schools since it is now nearly 20 years that the first (in connection with the Glasgow Royal Infirmary) was founded, and from the first proved its value. The reasons no doubt are the expense of maintaining these schools, that of the one in connection with the London Hospital being estimated at £1,200 per annum, and the fact that in the smaller hospitals there is a difficulty in forming a class sufficiently large to obtain the best educational results.

The alternative, as we have from the first pointed out, is the establishment of preliminary training courses in connection with educational colleges in London and other large centres, and until this is achieved, and the cost borne by the pupils themselves,

preliminary training of probationers, greatly as it is to be desired, is unlikely to become general. Hospital committees hesitate to expend their funds on schemes of a purely educational character in connection with preliminary training, although, no doubt, they obtain a financial return in the increased efficiency of their nursing departments.

In a pamphlet published in the United States by the Bureau of Education, by Miss M. Adelaide Nutting, whose services to nursing education are magnificent, and who will be one of the most illustrious and welcome visitors at the forthcoming International Congress of Nurses at Cologne, the value of preliminary courses for nurses is emphasised.

Miss Nutting, who is Director of the Department of Nursing and Health at Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, shows that the result of the establishment of a preliminary course at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, was to afford great encouragement to those who had urged it as an improvement in educational methods. The general principles underlying this plan of work are now approved by the Education Department of the State of New York, and Schools of Nursing, to be registered by the Regents, must be prepared to provide for their pupils a preliminary course of instruction and probation of not less than four months, during which term the pupils receive the theoretical and practical instruction necessary before undertaking any actual nursing in the wards. Teachers' College has for the last two years offered an eight months' course, and a number of hospitals deduct six to nine months from their regular course in recognition of such preparation. It will therefore be of extreme interest and profit to the delegates of the National Councils of Nurses, and others, to hear from Miss Nutting and other American Delegates something of the practical working of these courses.

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