

with regard both to the Hospitals, to the pupils, and to the thoroughly-trained Nurses into whom they would develop. We take it for granted that the term of education would extend over three full years, because it is morally certain that, within a short period, even those few Hospitals, like the London or St. Mary's, which are so far behind the times as to consider two years sufficient, and those antediluvian institutions which pretend to teach Nursing in one twelve months, will be obliged, by the force of the public and Parliamentary criticisms about to be directed to the subject, to raise their standard to the ordinary height, or explain to their subscribers why they are unable to keep pace with modern requirements. The amount of the fees to be paid will probably always vary at different Hospitals according to the opportunities which they afford the learner, and their public and professional prestige, exactly as the charges have always differed at the various Medical Schools. In view of the fact that the Nursing Pupil has to be boarded and lodged in the Hospital, whereas the Medical Student has to exist at his own expense, it might be argued that the nursing premium should be higher than the medical. But then, on the other hand, it must be remembered that not only will the course of education be always more extended and various for the latter than for the former, but that there is also this additional point to be considered: the work of the Nurse is more immediately practical, and becomes much sooner of a definite market value, than is the case with the student, who professionally is not supposed by the law to have charge of patients until he obtains his diploma or degree. The natural inference, therefore, is that inasmuch as a Probationer's services after her first and second year will represent an increasing pecuniary amount, the Hospitals could well afford to make her initial payment proportionately smaller. From the result of our inquiries, we are led to believe that in all probability the ordinary Nursing fees would vary from forty to eighty guineas, paid either in one or two instalments, and covering all outlay for examination and certification. As we pointed out a fortnight ago, a medical student's education costs from £800 to £1,000, so that it is quite possible that, in times to come, the expenses of a Nursing training will also be considerably higher than the estimate which we have given. The Nursing Schools then would at once obtain not only an income in direct proportion to the size of the Hospitals to which they were severally attached, but their expenditure would be greatly reduced by the abolition of the Probationers' salaries. Against this would have to be set

their outlay not only upon an increased number of Ward-maids, but also upon improved dietaries for their workers, because it is manifest that at one stroke the present system of semi-starvation and menial overwork of the Probationers would disappear. Still, even when this had been done—and putting aside the immense increase in efficiency, in improved care of the sick poor, and advances in other directions—all large Hospitals would still show a diminished total expense on the Nursing Department. We do not lay great stress upon this fact; indeed, under the circumstances, many might very reasonably urge that, when improved administration is essential, economy must not be pleaded, and that if the public do not provide the necessary funds, then the circle of the work must be drawn closer; but that whatever is undertaken must, at any cost, be performed in the very best way. We only point out this probable result of the system to show that its operation would be for the direct benefit of our Hospitals, and would give them better workers and better work at a less expense than at present.

But why do we advocate the system from the point of view of Probationers? Partly because, as we have pointed out before, we see clearly that it would greatly raise both the cause and the practice of Nursing, but chiefly because it would affect a complete revolution in the conditions under which Nurses work, from the very commencement even unto the very end of their professional careers. The London Hospital revelations may be taken to exemplify our meaning. There the Probationer, at present, is a perfect bondservant, bound by legal agreement to serve—for a scullerymaid's wages—for two whole years; liable at any moment, at the caprice of an individual, to be summarily dismissed, and her nursing career cut short; while, if she remains, she is sweated, overworked, and underfed. If she was a Nursing Student, and had paid in money a tithe of what she now pays in ill-health and discomfort, she would, in the first place, enter into a contract with the Hospital legally binding on it as well as on her. She would be compelled to conform to the rules, but she would receive the protection which the rules were designed to afford her from injustice and tyranny. As we have noticed, the arrangements for her meals and their characteristics would certainly have to be improved. Her holidays and times off duty would have to be more liberally construed. And inasmuch as it would be to the direct advantage of the Hospitals to have as many pupils as possible, the individual worker could be better treated in both these respects than is possible now, without the patients being neglected. The work itself must

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