

We wonder how safeguards are to be enforced, and by whom?

The Association also put on record its disapproval of an eight hours' day for nurses, but went so far as to approve limiting consecutive hours on duty to twelve for special nurses in hospitals.

A Post Graduate Course of four months' District and Public Health Nursing for graduate nurses is given at the training centres of the Victorian Order of Nurses at Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Salaries are given during the Course, and good openings are available after successful termination. The work of the Order has increased so much in the City of Toronto that it has been decided to double the staff of nurses.

Messrs. G. P. Putnam's autumn list announces that they are publishing "A Short History of Nursing," by Miss Lavinia L. Dock, price 12s. 6d. net. We may be quite sure that this History, like the larger one in four volumes, will be admirably written, and well worth securing.

The *Lancet* of September 27th has an interesting article on "Nurse Anæsthetists." The question as to whether nurses should be employed as anæsthetists was brought into prominence during the war, when on many occasions it proved expedient to utilise the services of the nurse as anæsthetist.

"Is this," asks our contemporary, "the beginning of a practice which may become the rule? There is no question that the usual rule-of-thumb technique can be acquired by any nurse of average intelligence, and that after proper instruction she can learn to induce anæsthesia slowly, to prevent respiratory complications, to maintain regularity of dose and therewith of depth of anæsthesia, and to give the needed relaxation. Is this enough for the safety of the patient and for the ease of mind essential to the operator if he is to exercise all his skill? An anæsthetist is a pilot, who steers the ship of life over a reef-abounding sea to the port of safety. His eyes must be trained to detect dangers at a distance, and, ever on the alert, he must spy out rocks before the vessel has touched them. . . . Can the non-medical, though trained, nurse reach this standard? If not, is it wise to introduce a less equipped order of practitioners, as nurse anæsthetists would be, when, if proper encouragement were given, a sufficient number of qualified doctors, men and women would take up anæsthetics as a speciality?"

Our contemporary points out that, in support of the claims of the trained nurse as an anæsthetist, Crile and Lower report close on 35,000 cases without a fatality, a nurse in most cases administering the anæsthetic. "In 1916 the authorities of Charing Cross Hospital, having decided to broaden the basis of the nursing curriculum, introduced a series of lectures on anæsthetics. . . . No one would doubt the desirability of teaching the nurse to give an emergency anæsthetic in case a professional administrator should be unprocurable, and the example of Charing Cross Hospital might with advantage be noted in the curriculum of the Central Midwives Board. . . . But those who advocate the innovation are, we hope, not blind to the risky side of the advice."

We agree with the conclusions of the *Lancet*.

The question of primary importance is the safety of the patient, and while a nurse may learn enough to justify her employment as an anæsthetist in an emergency, the work for which she is trained is nursing, and the patient's interests are, in our opinion, best served if the anæsthetic is given by a medical practitioner who specialises in this branch of work.

SALFORD UNION INFIRMARY.

MEDALS FOR NURSES.

At a meeting last week of the Salford Union Infirmary Committee, Nurse Isabel Corrin was awarded the Ingleby Gold Medal, Nurse Anna Murison the Townson Silver Medal, and Nurse Minnie Barnes the Townson Bronze Medal.

These medals are given annually on completion of the three years' training to those who are considered the best all round nurses of their year, and who have shown by their practical work, conduct, neatness, general attention to duty, and study that they are worthy.

All reports of Sisters, Home Sister, Assistant Matron, Medical Officers, Examiner, Matron and Medical Superintendent, also results of test examinations, are taken into consideration in awarding these medals. By this means, all favouritism is avoided, and the nurse has the satisfaction of knowing that all her superior officers have a share in the consideration of her capabilities and conduct. The remainder of the staff, too, feel that the award has been fairly and honourably won.

The nurses who obtain their three years' certificate are given the Bronze Medal (Hope Anchor) of their Training School.

The Matron would be glad to receive names and addresses of any of the former nurses who have not recently been in communication with her. All Hope trained nurses may have their Training School Medal by making application to her, the cost being about 6s.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)