

The Institution to which the signatories are attached has not been immune from this criticism, perhaps because it has always aimed at a high standard and possesses one of the most complete study-schemes. Yet, what are the facts? We give them for our own School; but it is typical of what obtains in a number of the best nursing schools in the country. The facts are:—

- i. A Preliminary Training School and Ward-trial period of 3 months.
- ii. After acceptance from this there is a full period of 3 months free from all lectures and formal study whatsoever, during the time that the probationer nurse is accustoming herself to her new duties and environment.
- iii. During the 3½ years (of the full 4 years' training) that follow the nurse has to attend a total of 107 lectures in all subjects—nursing, scientific and specialised (optional) subjects of the final year. And for these 107 lectures she has 182 weeks in which to attend them?

Comment is needless, unless it be to say that if it be a fact that to-day there is any School in which the nurses are lecture-ridden, it is its particular curriculum which needs overhauling and curtailment. But we do not believe that any such exists.

6. The proposed alteration is undoubtedly an attempt to justify the maintenance of the 3 years' curriculum which all modern experience shows to be an insufficient apprenticeship in nursing, apart altogether from academic courses, and the less desirable owing to the reduction of the average age of entrants.

It is an attempt to "lighten the curriculum" by relegating some of the work to a preliminary "school" stage. It cannot be too strongly pointed out that this method has not succeeded in medicine and in that profession there is no attempt made to thrust back fundamental subjects like Anatomy and Physiology, but only those which have become the normal content of a general education. The object of pushing out the preliminary sciences was to give more time for Anatomy and Physiology in relation to clinical work; and the defensible plea was that the Schools could deal satisfactorily with these Preliminary Sciences. There is no such plea possible here. (v. par. 1, i-iv).

7. HAVING REGARD TO ALL THESE CONSIDERATIONS WILL THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH SANCTION SUCH A STEP?

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION AND EXAMINATION COMMITTEE.

The Report of the Education and Examination Committee, presented by its Chairman, Miss Alicia Lloyd Still, C.B.E., R.R.C., to the General Nursing Council on November 24th, contained the following Recommendation:—

Recommendation 15.

"That the Council re-affirm the decision made by the Council on July 22nd, 1932, viz., 'That the Council is of opinion that it would not be in the interests of the candidates nor of the Profession that the Preliminary Examination should be divided.'"

Miss Lloyd Still said that this Recommendation had been discussed and approved by the Education and Examination Committee by 9 votes to 5. She moved its adoption.

Miss MacManus suggested that the Council should go into Committee [presumably *camera*, Ed.] when discussing the Recommendation.

The Chairman considered that the Council should hold the customary debate. It was an important question and she wished every member to have the opportunity of giving a considered opinion in full Council.

Amendment to the Recommendation.

Dr. Eason then moved the following Amendment to Recommendation 15 of the Education and Examination Committee:—

"That the Council approve the principle of the division of the Preliminary State Examination into two parts, and that it be referred to the Education Committee to draft a Scheme and Syllabus for submission to the Council."

The Amendment was seconded by Dr. Collins.

In proposing the Amendment Dr. Eason argued that one of the two parts of the Preliminary State Examination could be taken before the candidate entered the Training School.

(1) This would bridge the time between the age at which girls or men left school, and the age at which most of the members of the Council considered it desirable for girls to enter hospital.

Those in agreement with him desired that Elementary Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene should be separated from the rest of the Syllabus for the Preliminary Examination. There were now, and there would be more, teachers in the schools capable of giving instruction in the above subjects. If candidates passed in these before entering the Training Schools they would be relieved of much strain in the first year, when it was felt most. Resistance to that stress increased as years went on until when a nurse reached the position of Matron she seemed proof against both infection and strain.

There was no necessary connection between Elementary Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene, and hospital work—doctors studied them at Oxford and Cambridge and other Universities—they were of cultural value, and the subjects were taught *sui generis*.

Again biology and osteology were concerned with simple structures. Biology could be taught by any trained biologist.

Many of the smaller hospitals employed as lecturers those who had no special qualifications in the subjects they taught.

He was not suggesting that it should be compulsory for the first part of the Preliminary Course to be taken before a girl entered a hospital for training, but that it should be optional.

CRITICISM OF LEEDS MEMORANDUM.

Referring to the document circulated to members of the Council from Leeds, Dr. Eason characterised it as full of misapprehensions and misstatements.

Section 1 suggested that Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene were to be taught officially in the ordinary school period. This was not proposed.

Sub-section ii stated that the teachers in ordinary schools would rarely, if ever, possess a standard of practical experience comparable to those who were at present responsible for this fundamental part of nursing education. Did the signatories to the Leeds Memorandum really mean that instructors in universities or polytechnics were not capable of teaching biology?

In reference to Sub-section iii in a great many Training Schools teaching in Anatomy was given by those who had no special qualifications for giving it.

Sub-section v, dealing with the preliminary education of medical students, was untrue.

Section 2 was an entire exaggeration. Its argument was that if you permitted a nurse to take the preliminary training suggested before entering a hospital there would be an inevitable alteration in the present selection of nurses for training. This did not apply, because if a girl who had passed the first part of the Preliminary Examination wished to become a nurse this did not imply that she was bound to be accepted. Many girls were now having instruction in biology without any idea of becoming

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