

## A PLEA FOR MORE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE.

The two grades of nurses seem, alas, to have come to stay. It is easy enough to bring into being a lower grade in any work, small point in doing that unless care is taken to ensure also a higher standard in the higher grade. Can those of us who are responsible for the training of State Registered Nurses sit back and say complacently that the nurses of to-day are in all ways better trained than the nurses of ten years ago? No, we cannot, because we are turning out from our Training Schools young nurses who have had a minimum of practical experience and a large mass of only partially digested theoretical facts. Do we want our nurses to be assistant doctors?

What does the State Registered Nurse's training consist of at the present time? During her three years' stipulated training she spends three months in the Preliminary School, also, if she is "lucky" two months each year in the Senior Schools. She has three months holiday during the three years. This leaves her with two years and two months for her Hospital Training. Of this time she spends nine months on night duty. She has one year and five months left. Night duty is, of course, essential, and she learns a certain amount about the treatment of her cases, but a large number of them sleep most of the night, and her mornings are so busy getting in the maximum amount of work in the minimum amount of time, that her opportunities of careful observation of her patients are negligible. She spends at least six months in Departments, three months in the Operating Theatre probably, and three months in Casualty or Out Patients' Department. To have both Casualty and Out Patients' experience would, of course, be invaluable, but where is the time coming from? She might spend two months in each Department and so visit each in the six months. But is two months sufficient to cover the Operating Theatre? The student is left with eleven months for her Ward experience, out of which she may be allowed six weeks sick leave, and the remaining nine and a half months is supposed to give her a good all-round experience of both junior and senior work in all the Wards. Is it possible? She has to spend three months in the Children's Ward, granted this might be covered by one night duty. But would night work give her a sufficient insight into Pediatrics? She could only work as a junior night nurse there, for would it be fair to entrust the children to a senior nurse with no experience of children's work? Her final six and a half months is left for her to acquire a thorough grounding in Male and Female Medical and Surgical work and Special diseases, where they are nursed in separate Wards, such as Ophthalmic, Ear, Nose and Throat, and Genito-Urinary. True, she can take Male and Female Medical, one day and one night duty, and Surgical the same. Where the Hospital nurses its Gynæcological patients separately, that Ward is also to be squeezed in somehow. Small wonder that nurses sit for their Final State Examination without having visited some important Ward or Department.

What is the remedy? If the visits to the different Wards and departments are reduced to two months each, the nurse would cover more ground, but her progress through the Hospital would resemble the

Music Hall's idea of an American's Grand Tour. Especially when one remembers that before long she will be working a forty-eight hour week, and this will include one to two hours lecture time. More time must be found from somewhere to give her longer bedside experience. There is a Chinese Proverb which says: "One picture is worth a thousand words," I would interpret this to fit the problem of the nurses' training, to mean a single bedside demonstration can never be equalled by Classroom Practices.

D. de M.W.

## THE NURSES' TEXTBOOK OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY.\*

By A.M. SPENCER, M.B., Ch.B. (Bristol), B.Sc. (Wales), M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.M.

The student nurse of to-day is fortunate in the modern text books increasingly published and we would draw attention to "The Nurses' Textbook of Anatomy and Physiology," by A. M. Spencer, recently issued.

In this work (a complete textbook for the preliminary State examination) the student will find that the knowledge that must be grasped on these subjects is revealed with masterly clarity and encouragement; moreover, we think the Prologue, in which the author gives such valuable, kindly and stimulating advice—unique!

### PROLOGUE.

"DEAR NURSE,

In this prologue I want to give you some hints which will help to make your study of anatomy and physiology the pleasant task it can be.

In the first place, do not be discouraged by the number of new names you have to learn. If we are to describe the body accurately, we have to give special names to many different parts so that other people will know exactly what we mean when we use any particular term. Say these new names aloud to yourself as you read them, write them down on odd pieces of paper, and they will soon become familiar.

In any book such as this it is frequently necessary to mention parts of the body which have not been fully described in the preceding pages. This is because the different parts of the body are so closely inter-related that it is impossible to find any part which is completely independent and which therefore could be described entirely by itself without reference to other parts of the body.

In order to minimise this difficulty as far as possible, Part I. of this book consists of a very brief outline of the body as a whole, and after reading this you will have a fair idea as to how the various parts fit in and how the body works in general. . . .

As you study, always try to understand 'why' the body is doing what it is. Much care has been taken in the pages that follow to emphasize the 'why' of the various bodily processes, for if you understand what the body is trying to do it becomes much easier to understand the structure of the organs which the body has designed for a particular purpose and the processes going on inside the organs. Do not, therefore, learn the subject blindly, it is far too interesting for that; try to understand it and the learning will become very much easier. . . .

Get a hard chair, sit up to the table and always have pencil and paper at hand. Write out the new names you come across and especially copy the illustrations in this book until you can draw them from memory.

Never mind if your drawings are not artistic. In the

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