

It is essential to have a scheme which shall place the teaching of obstetrics upon the same basis as the teaching of medicine and surgery.

It is in the first place essential that the clinical teaching be given in hospitals provided for the purpose, where a sufficient and continuous series of patients can be admitted, and they should have a large extern department where the advanced student can attend patients at their own homes. Lying-in wards in a general hospital would be equally valuable if there were a sufficiently large number of beds to ensure a regular series of patients in sufficient numbers. A small ward with a few beds is quite inadequate for routine teaching, although of great value for the admission of special cases. A large number of cases is less of a necessity than a continuous series, and I am convinced that it is of the greatest advantage to teachers and pupils that medical students be taught their duties at the same time and place as monthly nurses and midwives. If taught separately, the average student learns little of the many things every nurse knows well, and the nurse of a few months' training thinks she knows a great deal more than the doctor, and does not realize the wide gulf that separates her knowledge and practice from that of the properly-trained doctor.

Owing to the great difficulty that there is in providing the necessary funds for the maintenance and development of the existing hospitals, supported as they are by the voluntary contributions of a comparatively small proportion of the community, it seems hardly possible to expect that adequate accommodation can be provided in this manner in the near future, whether by the extension of the lying-in hospitals or provision of suitable wards in the general hospitals or by the foundation of new hospitals. All these are urgently needed, and will require the expenditure of large sums of money.

The practice of obstetrics consists of the practical application of the ordinary principles of surgery and medicine to special organs and to special conditions, and yet as stated in the report of the Midwifery Training Committee of the General Medical Council, already alluded to, in twenty-three out of thirty-seven medical schools students are allowed to attend midwifery practice before they have received even an elementary training in the principles of medicine and surgery. All obstetric physicians who have to teach know well that it is impossible to instruct such students with any enthusiasm, however willing the students may be to learn.

The action of the General Medical Council in appointing this Committee is a very important step in the right direction. The