

left entirely to the discretion of the Matron. We have read this statement with our own eyes, and moreover have received corroborative evidence beyond dispute, or we frankly say that we could never have believed it. We marvel at the Staff of the London Hospital thus permitting a most distinctly Medical matter to be adjudicated upon by the Matron. We marvel that any body of educated professional men like the House Physicians and House Surgeons of the London Hospital should accept with equanimity the dictation of the Matron upon a matter of vital importance to the welfare of their patients. These meek and mild young gentlemen—whose addiction to bread and milk the Matron has amused a crowded court by graphically describing—have only themselves to thank, if their superior officer makes them the public butt of her ridicule. By submitting to be saddled with the responsibility of the care of the sick while denied the right—universally accorded in every other Hospital—of saying what special attention must be given to any special case, they have forfeited the slightest claim to be considered self-respecting; while the respect their seniors feel for them is most conclusively proved by the simple fact that they have thus placed them under the dictation of the Matron. We write strongly because we cannot but see that to put the Matron of a Hospital out of her place is every whit as detrimental to the well-being of its inmates as it would be *not* to recognise her just rights. We can well imagine what view our contemporaries, the *Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal*, will take of this entire reversal of the positions which should be held by the Medical Staff and the Matron respectively, and leave it to these journals to treat this question at further length.

With respect to the other serious allegation against the Hospital to which we drew attention last week—the sending out untrained women when the public apply for “thoroughly Trained Nurses”—the Matron has also given her answer. She has been compelled to admit that she does thus send out Probationers from the Wards to nurse the richer public outside. But she makes a double excuse. In the first place, she asserts that a Nurse is thoroughly trained at the end of one year; and in the next, that she has never received any complaints of any kind from anyone to whom she has sent a Private Nurse. To the latter apology we can only state that it does not accord with information which we have received from more than one source; to the former we give an unqualified contradiction. We are astonished to learn that the Matron went further, and stated that most Hospitals certificate their Nurses at the end of one year. That is of course

entirely erroneous. The great majority of large Training Schools now insist upon a three years' training—a very small minority are satisfied with only two. If the Matron is not aware of this we can only say that her ignorance of such an elementary Nursing fact almost passes belief.

But now we come to the crucial point of the matter—the admitted facts that the Matron takes in Probationers into the London Hospital, upon the understanding that they shall be taught the art of Nursing for two years, and yet that long before that period has expired she sends them out to private families, *to gain at the expense of the sick whatever experience they can acquire*; and that women, who are paid by this great charitable institution £20 a year, are farmed out to bring in fivefold.

There can be no quibbling about the facts. The Hospital, on one hand, asserts that it considers two years' work essential for a Nurse to be trained; and, on the other, it advertises that it will supply “thoroughly Trained Nurses” for a definite scale of payment. The richer classes, who by their subscriptions support the London Hospital, imagine that it will not delude them, and in that confidence apply to its Matron for “thoroughly Trained Nurses,” and in the belief that it had obtained such services last year paid no less than £1,200. It is perfectly certain that they never dreamt that a great public Institution was taking advantage of their necessity to palm off upon them semi-trained Probationers. Lord Kimberley accurately expressed what thousands of the public will feel on hearing the facts, when he said, “The advertisement is not very far short of fraudulent—money is received on false pretences.”

### OBSTETRIC NURSING.

— BY OBSTETRICA, M.B.N.A. —

#### PART I.—MATERNAL.

#### CHAPTER VII.—THE LOCHIAL PERIOD (DUTIES DURING).

(Continued from page 16.)

WE have dwelt upon the septic risks of child-birth; we will now touch upon some of the post-partum inflammations, due to other and various causes. The most frequent form is peritonitis, the result of inflammation of the womb, extending to the peritonium. Inflammation of the uterus may be due to difficult and protracted labour; to reaction from the refrigerating measures taken in post-partum hæmorrhage; to overheating and exposure to

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