

stifle all discussion has naturally reflected the greatest discredit on the Hospital, and has alienated many of its supporters, who naturally argue that things must be very bad indeed when the Committee thus burks inquiry and attempts to crush all criticism. The Committee has presented a Report, which we will briefly examine, and which, it will be observed, ingeniously omits to notice the most serious charges advanced against the Hospital, while it actually corroborates others. It has definitely declined either to inquire or to reform. In the face of this unheard-of attitude on the part of the Managers of a great public Charity—gentlemen who are therefore merely trustees for the public—there is clearly only one step possible, and that is publicity.

With the deepest regret, and only because all other means have failed, we take this step, and bring before the public some of the definite charges which have been made, and the indefinite replies with which some of these have been met. Let it be remembered that again and again private remonstrances have been made to the Chairman without avail, and then to the Committee uselessly. Now we appeal to Cæsar, to the ever-trustworthy instincts of honour and justice of the British public. For the sake of the sick and the suffering in the Wards of the London Hospital; for the welfare of Nurses not only in that Institution, but indirectly for the sake of those in every other Institution throughout these kingdoms; for the protection of the sick in private houses, we demand an investigation into the charges which have been made and which we now set plainly forth. And we appeal to every individual Governor and subscriber of the London Hospital, and to the public at large, to repeat and reiterate the demand for inquiry until it is granted and the necessary reforms are carried out. The following, then, are the chief charges which, in our judgement, need investigation.

I.—THAT THE LONDON HOSPITAL HAS FOR YEARS DECEIVED THE SICK PUBLIC. The importance of skilled Nursing in the modern treatment of illness or injury is well known. The richer classes can obtain excellently Trained Nurses from many private and public Nursing Institutions. For the last four or five years the London Hospital has been engaged in competing for public patronage with these commercial undertakings, and honourably conducted—as for example it is by St. Bartholomew's, University College, the Middlesex and other Hospitals—the system is of undoubted benefit to the public. But these other Institutions never send out women who have had less than three years' experience in Nursing, and who have received the certificate of their Hospital as thoroughly trained and efficient. The standard

of Nursing at the London Hospital is, in the first place, far inferior to that adopted at many much less important Institutions throughout the kingdom, because here the Certificate is gained after only two years' work; while at the others a term of three years is necessary. It should also be noticed that, whereas during the last ten years other large London Hospitals have increased their terms of training, the London Hospital alone has taken the retrograde step of reducing its period from three years to two. But, putting that aside, the London Hospital does not officially recognise—by certificating—its Nurses as trained until they have been two complete years in its service. It advertises that "thoroughly Trained Nurses may be had immediately for all private cases," and when the public, in the fond belief that a great English Charity would not deceive them nor make unrighteous gain from their necessity, apply for the best possible attendants for their sick, *the chances are that the London Hospital will send them a semi-trained pupil.*

The only excuse offered for this astounding fact, which is admitted (Q. 6,610), is the quibble that the Matron agrees with Miss Nightingale's opinion—expressed 17 years ago, when trained Nursing was in its infancy—that a Nurse can be trained in one year, although, as we have shown, the London Hospital will not take the responsibility of certificating Nurses as trained until they have had at least two years' experience, and the great majority of English Hospitals until the end of three years. The Matron (Q. 6,617) asserted that she had "no recollection of sending one out under a year." The House Committee, however, now reports that since the Private Nursing Staff was instituted, five years ago, 184 Nurses have been sent out. Of these no less than 138 had not completed their training, and *of these 33 actually had been less than one year in the Hospital* (p. 3 Report), and, therefore, according to the Matron's own showing, were untrained. In other words—and taking, be it noted, the Committee's own figures—out of every eleven persons who, believing in the good faith of the advertisement of the Hospital, applied to it for a "thoroughly trained Nurse," only *three* would obtain a woman whom the Hospital considered "thoroughly trained," and had certificated as such—while *six* would get a helper whom the Hospital does not—but the Matron, it appears, does—consider "trained"; and *two* would, on the Committee's own showing, be entirely deceived, for they would receive a pupil whom even the Matron asserts could not be termed trained, one who had been "less than a year in the Hospital." We contend that had the London Hospital truthfully advertised that it supplied Probationers in



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