

the London Hospital is standing on a volcano which may, at any moment, erupt. Last week, we received a copy of our contemporary, *The Morning Leader*, for July 28th, containing a strongly-written leading article, which we reproduce in another column. We have no hesitation in saying that if the truth is, in this way, dragged out piecemeal—a scandal reported in this paper, a revelation made in that, an indignant remonstrance expressed in a third, and then a struggle made in each to hush the matter up—the result will be that the public will come to believe that all Hospitals are like the London, and then the ruin of all is within a measurable distance. Once more, before it is too late, we call upon our contemporaries to aid in averting what would be nothing short of a national disaster. We call upon them to demand a public inquiry into the manner in which, both Nurses and the public are treated at present, at the London Hospital. The evidence given in the first Report of the Select Committee as summarised by us in "The London Hospital Scandals," furnishes ample grounds for the institution of such inquiry. If it were held, the additional information which would be forthcoming, would be followed by such an expression of public indignation, that the necessary reforms would of necessity be commenced at once, not only in the London Hospital, but also in the few other Institutions in the Metropolis and the Provinces, which maintain the same abuses. The public would know the extent of the evil—its confidence and interest would, in due course, be restored, and a very grave danger would be averted.

We return, now, to our subject at the point at which we had arrived last week. The fourth allegation contested by the London Hospital Committee in their Report to the Governors of that Institution, is stated as follows: "*That the staff is insufficient, that too great responsibility is thrown upon Nurses not thoroughly trained, and that there are too many paying Probationers.*" In the judgment of the Hospital Committee, these grievances "had no practical existence," and upon these points the Select Committee of the House of Lords give no expression of opinion. We will therefore, only

point out that the whole of this charge hinges directly upon the question, whether or not there were too many paying Probationers; because if so, it is quite manifest that—the bedroom accommodation being necessarily limited—too many short term workers must necessarily have meant too few on the regular staff. Consequently, there must have been too great a proportion of Nurses not thoroughly trained, and therefore too great responsibility must have been placed on Probationers—unqualified by knowledge or experience to discharge Nursing duties, with perfect efficiency. What then did the House Committee say on this point? They went out of their way to prove the case against themselves. They showed that, in the previous nine years, 538 ladies had entered as paying Probationers; that from 1883 to 1887 inclusive, the average number of entries was 60 per annum, that in 1888 and 1889, the average rose to 95 per annum, but that, in the year of the inquiry, only 47 were admitted in ten months, or at the rate of 56 for the whole year. In fact, while flatly denying that they had previously admitted too many paying Probationers, the entries were immediately restricted by more than one third.

The fifth allegation was, "*That too much menial work is cast upon the Nurses, that the hours are too long, and, generally, that the Nurses are overworked.*" Practically, the Committee denied the truth of this charge also, but everyone who has read the evidence given on behalf of the Hospital, as well as that given by the complainants, must feel that the assertion was proved up to the hilt. But, taking the Committee's own figures, it is shown that 62 out of 599 regular Probationers broke down in health and had to leave the Hospital during their training—that more than one Probationer, in fact, out of every ten, had her health and strength shattered by the stress to which she was subjected. And, be it remembered, that every one of these 600 women was a specially-selected worker, carefully examined upon her admission, and certified by eminent medical men as strong and healthy and fit for the work. Then of the remaining 420 Paying Probationers, 49, the Committee state, "left shortly after entrance," presumably, because of their failure also to stand the strain. The

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