

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—We here have a Hospital which has a heavy deficit, a Hospital which is obliged to tout right and left to obtain subscriptions, and can only exist by periodically making special strenuous appeals to the wealthy. You have convicted the management of waste in the catering for the patients, but I would draw attention to a much more serious abuse of the funds intrusted to it, which has not yet received the attention it deserves, as a specimen of the most reckless extravagance.

On his retiring last year the former House Governor, Mr. Nixon, was awarded a pension of £750 a year. Now this gentleman had been in the receipt of the very large salary of £887 10s. for a great many years, and in addition, had been boarded and lodged free, thus receiving over £1000 a year. Mr. Nixon had, therefore, ample opportunity to provide for the time when age would compel him to retire, and it seems to me simply a scandal that the Governors of the above Hospital should have been so lavish with moneys for which they were simply the trustees, and which had been given for the purpose of relieving the sick. The Governors point with pride to the fact that their Hospital is almost the only one in London supported to some extent by donations from the poor themselves; they now deplore a considerable falling off in these small donations. Is this falling off astonishing? What encouragement have the poor towards thrift, when they see their hard-earned pence wantonly squandered in this fashion by the committee to satisfy a feeling of personal regard for the late House Governor? And it must not be thought that Mr. Nixon's duties were particularly responsible or heavy, for in fact it is difficult to see exactly what he had to do which would in any way warrant a large salary being paid to him, as there were officials to do everything that one would have thought would have fallen to his lot. There was a secretary to deal with the financial part of the management (who was in no way under the House Governor's control). With the medical and the nursing departments Mr. Nixon had nothing to do. There was a surveyor, a storekeeper, and a housekeeper, so every department had its special officer.

The former secretary, Mr. Roberts (now House Governor), had also the large salary of £700 a year; thus two officers of this indigent Hospital drew over £1,700 per annum between them! And that this was, as I say, a reckless squandering of funds, is proved by the fact of the two positions having now been amalgamated, Mr. Roberts still receiving, I believe, his old salary (and an ample salary it is) of £700 a year; so the agitation raised against Mr. Nixon's pension has saved the Hospital no less than a clear £1,000 a year.

I will not touch upon the question of the Nurses

and the Nursing, as your Commissioner has already dealt with these, but would remark that it is doubtless very convenient for the authorities of the Hospital that the gentleman who wrote to you only quoted the particular paragraph you printed; any one who will read the evidence given before the Select Committee will see that there was ample reason for the Nurses' complaints. The Matron seems to have found the ambitious task of governing the Governors, and everyone else connected with the Hospital, more to her taste than the carrying out of her specific duties. Considering the despotic authority she possessed, and I suppose still possesses, it is wonderful that so much light has been shed on the internal management of the Nursing department.

I cannot think of anything more objectionable than that on the one hand the Governors of the Hospital should be most wilfully profuse with the money entrusted to their charge, and that on the other they should seize upon the greater part of the earnings of their Nurses.

The gentlemen who sign the letter you print assert that *The Hospital* has not the very remotest connection with the London Hospital; if this is not a case of *suppressio veri* it is certainly one of *suggestio falsi*, for one of the principal members of the Hospital Committee, and its most energetic defender, is the editor of this paper.—I beg, Sir, to sign myself, your most obedient servant,

August 21.

APERTUS.

A FINAL OFFER.

We return once more, and possibly for the last time, to the subject of the London Hospital. We cannot congratulate the friends of the existing management on the attitude they have adopted. Let us briefly recapitulate what has taken place. The London Hospital is an Institution doing admirable work where it is much needed. It is dependent almost entirely upon the subscriptions of the charitable. It has been cramped in its operation by the cursed want of pence, which vexes public Institutions as well as public men, with a "public," as Mr. RATHBONE, M.P., put it in a letter which we published yesterday, and to which we shall have to refer again, "not yet recognizing that "large funds are necessary to carry out improvements which most Institutions would be only too ready to make if they could rely upon the necessary means." One, perhaps, of the reasons for the unsatisfactory flow of contributions into the exchequer of the Hospital was the impression abroad that all was not well with the management. Rumours have been afloat for a long time, "unscrupulous attacks," Mr. RATHBONE calls them, "which have been for more than three years directed against the Hospital and its Matron." Now it is difficult to imagine that any one should

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