

THE *Argus* (Australia) remarks:—

"It seems reasonable to doubt now whether the Adelaide Hospital dispute can ever terminate. The area of disturbance has been gradually widening. A difference years ago as to the promotion of one Nurse led to the misconduct of others, and to a crusade by the Government against the late Board of Management and the Medical Staff, to the resignation of the latter body, to the importation of practitioners from the home country, and, finally, to a particularly bitter professional controversy, in which the new comers are alternately accused and accusers."

The history of this dispute is significant, and proves, first of all, the necessity for strict justice upon the part of hospital authorities in dealing with their subordinate officers, especially when their institutions are under Government control. Two years ago the sister of the then Chief Secretary was promoted over the heads of other Nurses who were her seniors in length of service. This naturally caused discontent, almost mutiny, in the Nursing ranks, and an honest desire to clear away any suspicion of nepotism caused a Government inquiry, which resulted in the confirmation of the appointment.

At the time of the dispute many of the Nurses protested, but two of their number—Nurses Graham and Hawkins—assumed an attitude of what the Board considered "effrontery and disrespect," and they were dismissed. Their case was taken up by a Mr. Kingston and the labour members in the Government, and the Royal Commission appointed to investigate the hospital management was compelled to find that the delinquent Nurses had been offensive and insubordinate, yet in the same breath recommended their reinstatement in the Hospital service. Replaced they were, in spite of the united protest of the Board and the medical staff, and there they remain to this day supported by the Government. The Medical Superintendent, Honorary Staff, Superintendent of Nurses, and the Board itself having passed successively away from the scene, worsted in the encounter.

The *Argus* is very severe on the partisan attitude adopted by the South Australian Government on the question, and ends with the significant remark:

"The awkward point is that whatever their real merits, the Government is enlisted as a partisan upon one particular side, and turns a deaf ear to the suggestion of an impartial tribunal, with a judge of the Supreme Court presiding. No more startling object lesson could be afforded of the triumph of temper over reason and of the mischievousness of Ministerial meddling in matters which ought to be entirely beyond political control."

Thus from an acorn of injustice has sprung an oak of discord!

The Hospital World.

SURGERY SYSTEMS.

OWING to the fact that several instances have, within the last year, come before the public of sick persons being discharged from the casualty departments of our Hospitals, and dying almost immediately afterwards, we have been led to make some inquiries as to the systems which prevail in these departments in different Hospitals. The latest case which has attracted attention is one in connection with the

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in the Kingsland Road, and our Special Commissioner paid a visit to this Hospital in order to procure correct information with regard to it. The report we have received is as follows:—The provision for casualty patients in this instance appears to be adequate for the size of the Hospital. There are two rooms just inside the front door, known respectively as the front and back surgery, where casualty patients are received. They are under the charge of the out-patient Sister. The out-patient rooms are in a different part of the Hospital, and have a separate entrance, but notice of any casualty case is at once given to the Sister by a porter, and either she or her assistant is immediately in attendance. The back surgery is practically a small ward, and contains a bed. Into this ward—for which bed and other necessary linen is supplied to the out-patient Sister—doubtful cases can be received. The Night Superintendent is responsible during the night for any case which may be admitted, and, at her discretion, puts on a special nurse. A fire is always lighted if required, and this was done in the case in point, until the morning, when the room was heated by hot water pipes. In the morning this case was seen and discharged. Later it was unhappily proved that the patient was much more gravely ill than was supposed. The best of us are liable to errors of judgment, and it was this cause, and not want of care on the part of the Medical or Nursing staff, or of adequate provision for doubtful cases, which led to her discharge, followed by the unhappy sequel. Into the back surgery infectious cases have hitherto been admitted until an ambulance could be obtained to remove them, the room being disinfected by sulphuring, and thoroughly cleaned immediately it was vacated, but now a more convenient arrangement is being made, and a room is set apart on the other side of the Hospital, in connection with the out-patient department, for this purpose.

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