

LONDON HOSPITAL SYSTEM.

HOW IT INJURES THE PROFESSION.

In the House of Commons, on Thursday, July 18th, Major Chapple asked the Under-Secretary of State for War (1) whether, in appointing nurses to the nursing staff of the Army, any discrimination is made against nurses trained in hospitals that farm out their nurses after the end of their second year's training, taking them away from their training in the wards and paying them 13s. per week while they are earning £2 2s. for the hospital. (2) whether the certificate given to nurses at the end of their second year's training in the London Hospital is accepted by the Army nursing authorities as qualifying for appointment to the Army nursing staff?

Mr. Macpherson, in replying, said: The regulations regarding the qualifications for appointment to the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service provide that a candidate must possess a certificate of not less than three years' training and service in medical and surgical nursing in a civil hospital having not less than 100 beds. Time spent in private nursing is not allowed to count towards the qualifying period of three years' training. The answer to the second question is in the negative.

Major Chapple, on July 25th, asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether the certificate of training given by the London Hospital is accepted as qualifying for appointment to the Army Nursing Service; whether the certificate states that the nurse has had not less than three years' training in the hospital; whether he is aware that nurses in the hospital are taken from their training in the wards and are sent out at the end of their second year to nurse private cases for the purpose of appropriation by the hospital of not less than 29s. per week of their earnings and not for professional training; and whether if time spent in private nursing is not allowed to count towards the qualifying period of three years' training, any steps are taken to discover what period of the years of training in the case of a London Hospital nurse applying for a post in the Army Nursing Service have been spent in private nursing?

Mr. Macpherson said: In reply to questions by my hon. and gallant friend, on Thursday last, I stated what certificate of training must be possessed by candidates for appointment to Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service. Steps are always taken to ascertain that a nurse has completed the necessary training.

And so the principle at issue—of justice to the worker—is befogged every time.

The fact is that Miss Lückes, the Matron of the London Hospital, is permitted to use the nurses as she chooses—as one does the lint and the bandages! If she elects to send them out private nursing to make money for the hospital, she may do so, and thus disqualify them for all the higher

positions in the profession for which a three years' certificate of training is obligatory.

But as the London Hospital has always had so much influential representation on the Nursing Board of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service the rules continue to provide a loophole for the admission of London Hospital nurses with a two years' certificate and service.

It is high time all these irregularities and privileges for the London Hospital were abolished.

The London should train and certificate its nurses after a three years' systematic training in the wards; it should shut down its "nurse farm" or work it on the co-operative plan for the benefit of members of the nursing staff who have gained a three years' certificate. Thousands of pounds would be thus paid to the workers instead of in support of the charity, and to provide huge salaries for senior officials.

The Nursing Board of Q.A.I.M.N.S. should cease to pander to the commercial régime of the London Hospital, establish the standard of the three years' certificate, and cease to recognise "service," whatever that may mean. Incidentally, the senior and best paid posts in the service should not, in the future, be reserved for London Hospital trainees, who carry on the obsolete traditions of their Alma Mater.

GIVING DIRECTIONS TO PARLIAMENT.

In discussing the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill recently in Committee in the House of Commons, the Chairman ruled out of order, on the ground that it would be giving directions to Parliament in regard to future legislation, a new clause, which Sir W. Cheyne and Major Hills had given notice of their intention to propose, providing that on the appointment of a Minister of Public Health, the powers and duties conferred and imposed by the Bill on the Local Government Board or on the President thereof should be transferred forthwith to the Minister of Public Health.

We have pointed out the unparliamentary proceeding of the Council of the College of Nursing in pledging Parliament in their prospectus to nurses as an inducement to register with the College—

(1) "If, therefore" (the prospectus states), "you are on the College Register you will, automatically, and without further fee, be placed upon the State Register, when the 'Nurses Registration Bill' is passed."

Thousands of nurses have been induced to join the College on this printed promise, which is "giving directions to Parliament in regard to future legislation" concerning which it has never been consulted, and which it may very naturally repudiate.

Miss Matheson, the Secretary of the Irish College Board, in her pamphlet, is even more unconstitutional in her pie-crust pledges.

Parliament is *very jealous* of its prerogatives, as people presuming to deal with legislation should be well aware.

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